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ABSTRACT

This is the second of four appendixes to the Rand study "Federal Programs Supporting Education Change." This appendix deals primarily with Right-To-Read, a federally administered program that funds innovative reading projects in schools that have been nominated by their district. It also contains descriptions of some Elementary Secondary Education Act Title III reading projects. Section 1 describes the origins and the planning and management strategies that the United States Office of Education adopted for Right-To-Read. Section 2 describes the role that state education agencies attempt to play in their program. Section 3 presents syntheses of the fieldwork case studies, which describe the similarities and differences found in the planning, implementation, and adaptation of each of the projects covered. It also attempts to generalize from the limited evidence. Section 4 presents the individual case studies for these Right-To-Read and Title III projects. (Author)

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FEDERAL PROGRAMS SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE, VOL. III: THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

Appendix B. Innovations in Reading

PREPARED FOR THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION,
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PREFACE

Rand is conducting, under the sponsorship of the U. S. Office of Education, a several-year study of federally funded programs designed to introduce and spread innovative practices in public schools. These change agent programs normally offer temporary federal funding to school districts as "seed money." If an innovation is successful, it is assumed that the district will continue and disseminate part or all of the project using other sources of funds. The Rand study examines four such federal change agent programs--Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title III, Innovative Projects; Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title VII, Bilingual Projects; Vocational Education Act, 1968 Amendments, Part D, Exemplary Programs; and the Right-To-Read Program. The study identifies what tends to promote various kinds of changes in the schools and what doesn't; in particular, the Rand study will identify for federal, state, and local policymakers the nature, permanence, and extent of dissemination of innovations that are associated with the various federal programs and with various federal, state, and local practices.

A series of five reports describes the first-year results of the Rand study (July 1973 to July 1974):

Volume I (R-1589/1-HEW, A Model of Educational Change) provides a theoretical perspective for the Rand study by analyzing the current state of knowledge of planned change in education and by proposing a conceptual model of factors affecting change processes within school districts.*

Volume II (R-1589/2-HEW, Factors Affecting Change Agent Projects) contains the analysis of survey data collected by a national sample of 293 projects in 18 states during November and December 1973.

Volume III (R-1589/3-HEW, The Process of Change) summarizes the findings and policy implications resulting from 29 case studies of change agent projects conducted by Rand staff members and consultants in 25 school districts during April and May 1974. The case study sites, chosen from the original sample of 293 projects initially surveyed, represent a variety of project objectives and local district conditions. This report also describes the role of the state education agencies in selecting, managing, and disseminating change agent projects.

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*Because of Rand's interest in advancing knowledge of organizational behavior in educational institutions, the research underlying this report was supported in part by an allocation of Rand corporate research funds.

Volume IV (R-1589/4-HEW, The Findings in Review) summarizes the findings of Vols. I, II, and III, and also synthesizes extensive data collected by Rand on federal-level program strategy and management for each of the change agent projects. Volume IV also includes a discussion of alternative federal strategies for promoting innovation.

Volume V (R-1589/5-HEW, Executive Summary) presents the study's methods and results for a general audience.

Subsequent research will collect additional data on Titles III and VII of ESEA, with particular focus on projects whose federal funding has expired.

This report is one of four appendixes to Vol. III. Each appendix deals with a different federal change program and brings together our first-year observations and findings at federal, state, and local levels. Appendix A deals with Title III, App. B with reading programs, App. C with bilingual education, and App. D with career education.

This appendix deals primarily with Right-To-Read, a federally administered program that funds innovative reading projects in schools that have been nominated by their district. It also contains descriptions of some Title III reading projects. Section I describes the origins and the planning and management strategies that USOE adopted for Right-To-Read. Section II describes the role that state education agencies attempt to play in their program. Section III presents syntheses of our fieldwork case studies, which describe the similarities and differences we found in the planning, implementation, and adaptation of each of the projects covered. It also attempts to generalize from the limited evidence. Section IV presents the individual case studies for these Right-To-Read and Title III projects. In all cases, the names of states, school district projects, and people are fictitious. Each district that participated did so under a promise of anonymity; our respondents' frankness and cooperativeness testify to the merits of this guarantee in producing a fair picture of how these projects developed, with their various strengths and weaknesses.

Ideally, our work would include a synthesis to describe how interactions of federal, state, and local levels have shaped Right-To-Read. Building on this synthesis, we could then recommend to policymakers at each level courses of action that taken together could improve the effectiveness of Right-To-Read. But we had to settle, in view of time and resource limitations, for much less than this ambitious goal. Instead, in this appendix, we present our findings at each level of government in separate sections with little attempt to integrate the findings from different levels. That task is approached in Vol. IV of this series (R-1589/4-HEW, The Findings in Review), but cannot be pursued to its conclusion within the framework of the present study.

What we have produced in this appendix is a description of Right-To-Read as it operates at the federal and state level, together with our description and analysis of factors that contribute to the strengths and weaknesses of selected Right-To-Read and Title III projects as they actually operate in the setting of the schools. The implications of our findings for public policy are discussed more fully in Vol. IV.

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I. RIGHT-TO-READ

GENERAL OVERVIEW

This section gives a brief overview of the Right-To-Read program to serve as a background for understanding the case studies of individual projects. The information reported here was obtained from interviews with program personnel and documents on file at the U. S. Office of Education.

The Right-To-Read program was first publicly announced by Commissioner James Allen in an address to the 1969 Annual Convention of the National Association of State Boards of Education. In this address, Commissioner Allen called for a total national commitment to Right-To-Read and projected a high-priority programmatic attack on reading problems across the nation. He expressed an urgency about solving reading problems and proposed an ambitious goal for the Right-To-Read effort: "eliminating illiteracy by 1980." This objective has been adopted by the Right-To-Read program as a focal point for its energies.

A unique change strategy has evolved for implementing the Right-To-Read idea broadly outlined by Dr. Allen. Right-To-Read's role in this strategy is to provide the leadership but not the bulk of the resources needed for a nationwide reading improvement effort. The resources are planned to come from redirecting the use of funds from existing federal, state, and local sources. A multilevel approach to redirecting resources is being attempted, whereby the Right-To-Read program is organizing reading improvement programs at the federal, state, and local levels in education as well as in communities, private industry, and a number of professional associations and national service groups. The idea is that these organizing efforts will not only lead to successful reading improvement programs in these organizations but also create an impetus for change in reading that will spread beyond the points of federal intervention. Right-To-Read's role in organizing reading improvement programs is to be the "catalyst" for change by assisting in the establishment of reading as a top priority within each organization, providing guidelines for planning a reading improvement program, offering technical assistance, and making available model reading programs. Small grants of funds may also be provided for administrative and other kinds of expenses such as staff training.

In line with this strategy, the Right-To-Read program has had up until recently no specific authorizing legislation. The limited funds needed to operate the program have been obtained through the existing legislative authority of the Cooperative Research Act. Although the provisions of this act have imposed some constraints on feasible activities, there has been flexibility for Right-To-Read to move forward on its plans. In FY 1974, the Congress passed legislation as part of PL 93-380, a bill amending the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, specifically establishing a Title VII Reading Improvement Program in OE.

PROGRAM BUDGET AND NUMBERS OF PROJECTS

As indicated in Table 1, the funding of the Right-To-Read program has remained stable over time and at the relatively low level of less than $12 million. A portion of these funds has been spent on a series of projects in both local school districts and communities. These projects are intended to generate model reading programs that will be useful as demonstration sites in efforts by states and other local school districts developing their own reading improvement programs. These school district projects are of two types: the so-called "school-based" projects, which are three-year grants of approximately $40,000 per year to a single school in selected local districts; and the "large-city" projects, which are three-year grants of $100,000 per year to groups of several schools in school districts in the 21 cities with the largest population. The "large-city" projects are the focus of the case studies reported here.

Right-To-Read has also made grants of $100,000 or more to 31 states for use in hiring Right-To-Read staff, training LEA personnel in planning and implementing reading improvement programs, and for other expenses. Over 50 projects of varying sizes are supported for numerous other purposes, including the development of a TV adult literacy course, sponsorship of a number of centers for training tutors to work with adult illiterates, demonstrations of improved teacher training programs in reading in colleges of education, seminars in reading improvement for principals, and other activities. See Table 2.

Table 1

APPROPRIATIONS FOR RIGHT-TO-READ

($ million)

Fiscal Year	Appropriations
1971	2
1972	12
1973	12
1974	12

Table 2

NUMBER OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED

Fiscal Year	Demonstration Projects			State Grants	Special Projects
	Large City	School-Based	Community-Based		
1971	--	--	--	--	3
1972	21	85	68	--	21
1973	21	85	68	11	51
1974	21	85	74	31	52

STRATEGY FOR DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Right-To-Read is supporting its demonstration projects primarily for the purpose of developing model reading programs that will be useful in working with states, and does not currently plan to fund another round of projects. After the demonstration projects funded in 1972 have reached maturity, the plan is to shift more emphasis to working with the states.

Right-To-Read has developed a unique and highly specific approach to reading improvement in schools that its demonstration projects were expected to follow. This approach, which is called the School-Based Plan-of-Action, prescribes the kind of innovation that a school district is expected to undertake, a planning process, and organizational guidelines. The key elements of the School-Based Plan-of-Action strategy are as follows:

- Project schools should implement some form of diagnostic/prescriptive reading, which is a teaching-by-objectives approach to reading that allows flexibility in the actual choice of curriculum and instructional methods.
- Project schools should attempt a total approach to reading improvement, which means that rather than changing one or two components of the school reading program, a whole series of interrelated changes should be made, such as introducing new instructional methods, new curriculum materials, parent involvement, a reading center, and specialist personnel.
- In each school all the teachers and all the students, whether or not they have severe reading problems, should be involved. This is called the whole school concept.
- In each school, the principal should be the project director and should be fully responsible for project decisionmaking and management.

- Each school should appoint a Unit Task Force consisting of a central office staff member, the principal, two teachers, two parents, and the school librarian (optional) to plan the reading improvement effort and oversee implementation.
- Each project school should decide on its own reading improvement program and plan it by following an 11-step planning process kit designed by Right-To-Read staff. This planning process begins with a needs assessment (which has also been laid out in kit form) and includes steps to select project objectives, instructional materials, diagnostic instruments, instructional approaches, personnel, in-service training, and the project budget.
- Each project should emphasize staff development by spending 85 percent of the total budget on in-service and other training activities.

In addition, Right-To-Read provided each project with expert technical assistance from Technical Assistance Teams located at five sites across the country. Members of these teams periodically visited projects to help with planning, in-service training, and problem solving. Team members were specifically trained in the 11-step planning process and were supposed to work closely with projects during this phase of activity.

The selection of Right-To-Read projects was handled somewhat differently from other federal programs. Instead of a competitive award, Right-To-Read asked each state to nominate four schools, one each of the following types:

- Transition sites: schools without substantial federal funds earmarked for reading improvement that demonstrate a willingness to make the transition from existing ineffective reading programs to effective reading programs. Such schools were to contain the largest number of pupils in kindergarten through 12th grade who fall in the lowest quartile in reading.
- Redirection sites: schools having the same qualifications as transition sites except with substantial federal funds earmarked for reading improvement.
- Expansion sites: schools in which promising practices were occurring and Right-To-Read money would be used to expand these practices into exemplary programs. Such schools should have substantial numbers of students in the second and third reading quartiles.

- Impact sites: schools already having exemplary reading programs in such areas as teacher training, diagnostic/prescriptive approach, individualizing instruction, classroom organization, management, and others.*

From the list of nominations submitted, Right-To-Read staff selected 85 schools, essentially at random, but in such a way as to produce an even distribution of project type and location.

Since the states nominated only a few projects in the central cities, where reading was a critical problem, it was decided to award Right-To-Read projects to school districts in the 21 largest cities. Again, the award was noncompetitive, with the district superintendents asked to nominate the participating schools. The request was for three schools in each district, all of which would participate in the Right-To-Read project, with one school as an impact site, one a transition site, and the third a redirection site. The idea was that the impact site would initially help the other two schools become impact sites, and then all three sites would become demonstration sites for districtwide replication within the three-year life of the project.

In addition to providing project resources, management guidelines, and technical assistance, the federal Right-To-Read staff makes periodic visits to the demonstration sites.

STRATEGY FOR WORKING WITH STATES

The Right-To-Read strategy for working with the states, which is still at an early stage of development, is the component of the program that the federal staff believes potentially can have the most significant impact on reading practices. Under this strategy, the states are expected to finance their Right-To-Read effort with existing federal and state funds, or with new funds legislated by the state for reading, and to retrain personnel already in the SEA and concerned with reading rather than hiring new staff for Right-To-Read. This is a key aspect of Right-To-Read's overall approach of using existing funds and personnel in a reading improvement effort.

A second component of the state strategy is that the Right-To-Read office supplies the states with technical know-how in organizing and implementing a reading improvement effort. This technical know-how is in the form of guidelines to states on what should be done to organize and implement a state Right-To-Read effort; federal staff assistance to states in developing plans, reviewing progress, and suggesting approaches; model state management practices; model reading programs for schools; and model change strategies for local projects (e. g., the school-based Plan of Action strategy developed by the federal program office). Indicative of the relations between states and the federal program office, Right-To-Read works with each state to develop a reading program that meets its needs and meshes with the organizational realities of that state.

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*These definitions are from the Right-To-Read Plan of Action issued in the summer of 1971.

Right-To-Read is also encouraging states to adopt the "multiplier strategy" for their reading improvement programs, originally developed by the Minnesota SEA. The idea is to select twenty or so persons in LEAs distributed demographically across the state and train them in reading methods and the basic Right-To-Read approach to reading improvement. These persons then return to their school districts and build a local Right-To-Read organization. Once the local program is operating successfully, these individuals train other local districts in the Right-To-Read approach. This year, Right-To-Read is working with some states to develop and package model programs for training the original cadre of LEA administrators, which is a first step in implementing the multiplier strategy.

The goals and strategies of the Right-To-Read program at the state level are described in Section II.

II. STATE EDUCATION AGENCY PARTICIPATION*

ROLE OF SEAS IN DEMONSTRATION SITES

SEAs have had a minimal role in dealing with Right-To-Read's demonstration projects in schools. Although the SEAs were responsible for nominating sites, Right-To-Read completely excluded them from the selection process and, at least in the states where we interviewed, did not even notify them when the awards were made. Within those states that maintained strong reading programs before Right-To-Read, our interviews suggested that this slighting of the SEA staff created frustration and resentment. Right-To-Read also did not encourage the states to become involved in monitoring the demonstration sites on the theory that this would minimize potential conflicts between the states and the federally supplied Technical Assistance Teams concerning the implementation of the Right-To-Read Plan-of-Action strategy.

Of the ten states represented in our Right-To-Read sample, only two have had contact with their school-based sites, one peripherally and one actively. In both cases, the states view their degree of involvement as voluntary. In the state claiming active involvement with school-based sites, members of the SEA describe themselves as technical assistants, and view their job as one of providing this specific service to all reading programs in the state. In the state with peripheral involvement, a large, active, state-funded reading program had been operating before Right-To-Read money became available. Because of the size of this reading program, the SEA's Reading Division can visit only 80 out of the 1000 projects each year; and Right-To-Read's sites are among those projects that might be visited. The Reading Division assumes the responsibility for coordinating reading instruction for all reading projects but seldom visits the Right-To-Read sites, which are regarded as "one less place to go." The main involvement with the Right-To-Read sites is through one person on the division's staff of 13 who has the responsibility for disseminating information about all projects, including both the state and Right-To-Read sites.

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*Based on telephone interviews with program officers in eighteen states and personal interviews in nine.

When asked whether they would change the management of the school-based sites if they had a more active role in the program, about half of the Right-To-Read directors responded yes, they would make changes if given the opportunity.

Of those content with the U. S. Office of Education (OE) management of the school-based sites, two were directors who found federal program staff helpful and the guidelines beneficial; another was from a state with so extensive a reading program that the SEA was pleased not to have the additional responsibilities.

On the other hand, one of the four directors who wanted a change in management was from a state with an extensive and well-developed reading program. In this instance, the state Right-To-Read director ridiculed what he considered the redundant, if not wasted, federal effort that was going into the school-based sites. He stated that the "school-based sites are doing what [our] schools have been doing for years." This state is now in the process of pulling together the best components of all the state reading programs for dissemination. The director concluded that state management of school-based sites would permit administration on a larger plan basis, thus allowing for more innovation and greater dissemination.

The remaining three state Right-To-Read directors in favor of change wanted less to assume management of these sites than to receive information about them. Dissemination failed, they felt, because of lack of contact between the SEA and the project; that is, the school-based sites are isolated from the rest of the state (two states) and are provided poor technical assistance (three states view federal technical assistance as very weak).

The wish to change management of school-based sites is highly correlated with reported conflict with OE. A frequent complaint is that OE fails to notify the SEA about which local education agency (LEA) has received the Right-To-Read grant. Other problems concern role definition; the SEA wants to provide technical assistance to the school-based site and/or monitor the project, but it feels OE's resistance. A very touchy problem, reported by one state, occurred when the state nominated a school as an exemplary Right-To-Read site and OE then made it a redirection site (i. e., a school willing to make the transition from an existing ineffective reading program to an effective reading program).

EFFECTS OF THE FEDERAL PROGRAM ON THE STATES

From the perspective of the Right-To-Read directors in the SEAs that we visited, the demonstration sites have failed to provide exemplary programs for the states.[*] They feel that this failure stems from the "You go your way and I'll go mine" attitude of OE toward the SEAs regarding these sites. The demonstration schools were most often typified as isolated from the mainstream of reading practices in the state, in need of better technical assistance than OE can provide, and hence not influential.

Only four of the ten Right-To-Read directors whom we interviewed stated that the federal program staff and the federal guidelines have had an effect on their state reading program. One of these states has been able to initiate a statewide reading program, and the federal money helped bring this state program to fruition. This state used the federal Plan-of-Action strategy in working with its schools. Two other states used the Minnesota Plan[**] in developing their reading programs, and in these states Right-To-Read money was used to increase SEA reading staff size.

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[*] From the viewpoint of the federal office, it is, in fact, too early to tell. The federal program officers are currently in the process of identifying which sites were exemplary. After this is done, they may try to use these projects as demonstration sites for state purposes.

[**] A strategy developed by the Minnesota State Department of Education to implement a statewide reading improvement effort.

III. SYNTHESIS OF CASE STUDIES

John G. Wirt

HISTORY OF INNOVATION IN READING

Innovation in reading practices is not a new phenomenon in American schools. It has been occurring continuously over the years in response to a variety of social and technical forces.

In the early years of the country, the primary forces leading to change in reading were social and influenced mainly the content of classroom readers. During the period of the late 1700s and early 1800s, classroom readers contained patriotic stories and contemporary American literature, as a means of pulling the country together and away from its European origins. Also, great stress was placed on rules and exercises in correct pronunciation, for the purpose of overcoming the diversity of spoken dialects and promoting greater unity in American language. By the late 1800s, these concerns evolved to where reading emphasized educating the populace for intelligent citizenship, which grew from an increasing realization that the success of the new democracy was dependent not so much on arousing patriotic sentiment as on developing the intelligence of the people, who were to choose their representatives. Around the turn of the century, as the nation was maturing, the primary function of reading became the development of appreciation for and a permanent interest in literature.

DESCRIPTION OF CASE STUDY SITES

Adamston, a northeastern city of 400,000, has long been a center for transportation, a distribution point for many of the nation's leading products. The population is moving away from the decaying, often violence-prone inner city.

Middleton is an old northeastern seaport city with many diversified industries. Its most serious inner-city problem is racial strife in the schools.

Rockton, a midwestern city in a predominantly agricultural state, is a major manufacturing center, with a population (about 800,000) that is made up of Germans, Poles, blacks, and Chicanos.

Brickton, a northeastern seaport city, has been largely rebuilt in the last decade and now supports a diversified manufacturing industry. Its population of over 1 million is almost half black. The city has long been considered a center for learning.

Lindaton is a middle- to upper-middle class residential suburb (population 50,000) of a large midwestern city. The school district is known for its quality teaching staff and innovative practices. Although near the central city, Lindaton is only now experiencing the in-migration of blacks.

Able is an older northeastern city that has had its share of inner-city problems, including controversy among its varied ethnic population about the quality of city schools.

Education research began to influence reading in the early 1900s. In the first quarter of the 1900s, researchers pointed out the importance of silent reading in learning to read, against the established tradition of emphasis on oral reading. Researchers also pointed out that reading speed was an important skill and suggested classroom exercises for improving this skill. For the first time, different reading disabilities began to be recognized and the concept of remedial reading emerged.

In the next 25 years, reading was again strongly influenced by social forces, only this time the effect was not so much on content of readers as on the priority of reading in the schools. During World War II, an illiteracy problem of surprising proportions was uncovered in processing personnel for military service and, after the war, concern grew that schools should be doing a better job of teaching students to read. Also during this time there was rapid expansion of the mass communications industry, which caused educators to be concerned for the first time on a broad scale with how to develop interest in reading.

The period since the 1950s has been dominated by advances in reading research and development, and by rising public support for a strong federal role in solving major social problems. The developments in reading research and development have included increased understanding of decoding processes in learning to read (e.g., from the science of linguistics), new techniques for teaching reading (e.g., language experience), advances in understanding of basic reading skills, and explosive growth in the range of instructional programs and materials that have been developed and are available on the market.* Rising public concern for serious social problems has resulted in legislation authorizing a strong new role for the federal government in providing resources and leadership for the solution of major education problems. In reading, this support has resulted in the Right-To-Read program (described in Sec. I) and the high priority on reading improvement in many other federal education programs. Of the other programs in the change agent study in addition to Right-To-Read, reading projects are mostly in the state and federal portions of the Title III program.

FIELDWORK DESIGN

One of the major areas of recent advance in reading research and development has been in the diagnostic/prescriptive approach to reading instruction, and this was the basic reading innovation selected for investigation in the fieldwork in reading projects. All six of the reading projects selected were, at least as stated in their project proposals, for implementing the diagnostic/prescriptive approach in the project schools. The basic idea of the diagnostic/prescriptive approach is to systematize reading instruction by specifying a sequence of well-defined skills for teachers to use in organizing classroom instruction, and by providing teachers with the means to individualize instruction through (1) testing the achievement of their students with respect to the set of prespecified skills and (2) presenting activities to individual students that are specifically designed to strengthen their performance in skill areas of weakness detected through testing. Testing and prescription is to be done frequently throughout the school year as students progress. The diagnostic/prescriptive approach capitalizes on the progress that has been made in research on the reading process and basic skills, and in the development of instructional programs to teach these skills.

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*The contents of this section are drawn and paraphrased from Nila Benton Smith, American Reading Instruction, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1965.

This approach is in great contrast with the more traditional approach to the teaching of reading where students proceed essentially lock-step through an instructional program decided on by the teacher with virtually no mid-year testing and little adjustment of the basic curriculum to meet individual needs. Most teachers adjust their reading curriculum to individual students to some extent, by giving extra help on the side to some students, and test through interpreting informal cues. But with the diagnostic/prescriptive approach, instructional activities should be much more highly differentiated among students and much more frequently modified during the course of instruction.

In addition to limiting the reading fieldwork to projects implementing the diagnostic/prescriptive approach, restriction was also made to projects in which:

- Multiple schools were involved. By limiting investigation to projects in which two or more schools were involved, separation of project effects from interschool differences was facilitated.
- Primarily elementary schools were involved. By limiting investigation to projects involving primarily elementary schools, the projects were more similar in objectives and activities.
- A total approach to change was attempted. This was defined as follows: (1) the project was aimed at changing the regular classroom teachers in the project schools; (2) the project included other components such as learning centers, peer tutoring, or parent involvement; and (3) the project involved all the students in the project

schools, or at least all the students in several grade levels. In practical terms, these criteria eliminated programs that were strictly tutorial or remedial, or that did not have a sizable in-service component.

- The project was located in a heavily urban area. The larger the city, the more serious is the problem of low reading achievement, and change is often thought to be more difficult to achieve in such cities. We chose, therefore, to limit our investigation to projects in urban school districts (more than 90 percent of the school district population is classified as urban according to data from the U.S. Census).

Using these criteria, we sorted through all 150 Title III projects in the Rand change agent study, but could find only two that met these criteria. Both of these were in the federal Sec. 306 portion of Title III. The school districts (names fictitious) in which these projects were located and a brief project description are shown in Table 1.

It is surprising that there were only two reading programs in Title III satisfying our criteria, because the kind of innovation included seems so central to the objectives of schools. Of the 150 projects in the change agent sample, 95 had indicated in the survey questionnaire that they had something to do with reading. Of these, 41 satisfied the multischool and urban criteria, implying that 39 of them were not for implementing the diagnostic/prescriptive method or were not for a "total approach" to reading improvement. Judging from the abstracts of these projects, most were of a peripheral nature, such as remedial reading programs, or were of a more innovative variety, such as the teaching of reading in "content areas" (e.g., social studies). For our fieldwork, we selected projects that were more of the "hard-core" variety, that is, less unorthodox in the type of innovation attempted and more intensive in treatment.

Of the 25 Right-To-Read projects in the Rand change agent study, 12 satisfied our criteria; and of these, four were selected for fieldwork, essentially arbitrarily. The school districts (names fictitious) in which these projects are located and a brief project description are shown in Table 2. All of these projects are from the set of projects that Right-To-Read calls its "large-city schools" projects. Right-To-Read also has a number of single-school projects that the program office judges to be more successful on the average, but that are mostly in suburban or rural school districts.

Table 1

DESCRIPTION OF TITLE III, SECTION 306, READING PROJECTS

School District	Description in Project Proposal
Lindaton	A group of reading teachers was to be trained in the latest reading methods, including diagnosis and prescription. These methods were to be implemented in all nine district schools through assignment of these reading teachers to these schools. The project was managed from the district office.
Baker	A series of training workshops for teachers in the latest reading methods and including diagnosis and prescription was to be developed and offered to teachers. Follow-up service into classrooms was to be provided. The project was managed by an independent agency, outside the school district, but funded through the school district.

Table 2

DESCRIPTION OF THE RIGHT-TO-READ READING PROJECTS

School District	Description in Project Proposal
Rockton	Three schools were to implement a new basal reading program incorporating diagnosis and prescription and make several other changes in reading centers, learning centers, and tutorial programs. A fourth school was to implement a complete diagnostic/prescriptive reading system.
Brickton	A complete diagnostic/prescriptive reading system and training program for teachers was to be developed, demonstrated in ten schools, and then implemented citywide.
Adamston	A highly specified, intensive, and skill-based reading and reading readiness program was to be implemented in two of the district's schools.
Middleton	Funds were to be used for in-service workshops on diagnostic/prescriptive reading and provision of assistance to teachers.

As described in Sec. I, all Right-To-Read projects were expected to follow the "School-Based Plan of Action" strategy in planning and implementing their reading improvement program:

- Grant-in-Aid Funding: Selected school districts were informed in late 1971 that they would receive $100,000 per year for three years for the improvement of reading and were asked to select three schools where the money would be spent. The first $10,000 of the award was to be spent on preparing a plan for the rest of the project. Thus, school districts received money before any plans were set on how the money would be spent. This procedure was intended to provide maximum flexibility to school districts in using the funds provided and to demonstrate that the Plan of Action strategy would work in a wide variety of school districts--not just the ones able to win a grants competition.
- School-Based Problem Solving: The thrust of Right-To-Read's strategy is that the federal support is to be used for local problem solving; that is, each school in a project should consider its needs and decide what improvements to make in the area of reading. To further reinforce this emphasis, Right-To-Read specified that the "principal should be the project director" for each school, on the theory that the principal is the key change agent in a school.
- Total Approach: In problem solving, schools were to consider the needs of all grade levels (the "whole school"), and to develop a comprehensive plan for reading improvement, including all the elements necessary for a complete reading program.
- Type of Innovation: To narrow the range of problems schools would consider and to stimulate adoption of the latest reading technology, Right-To-Read also specified that schools should implement the diagnostic/prescriptive method of reading instruction.
- Management Needs Assessment and Planning: As aids in problem solving, project staffs were provided with and trained in the use of step-by-step kits for performing a needs assessment and preparing a project plan.
- Technical Assistance: As a further aid in problem solving, projects were also provided access to Technical Assistance Teams, who were versed in the Right-To-Read Plan-of-Action strategy and were

available to visit projects for consultation on problems and to help with in-service training of teachers.

- Staff Development: Eighty-five percent of project funds were to be spent on staff development.

The support strategy for the two Title III, Section 306 projects differs in some important respects:

- Competitive Award: In Title III, school districts develop their own ideas for projects and submit detailed proposals for review by the federal program office. Awards are made by the federal program office on the basis of the quality of these proposals in comparison with other proposals submitted.
- Central Project Staff: Although not specified as an element of Title III strategy, most projects are organized so that objectives and activities are determined by a central project staff and not by individual schools.
- Management: Projects are expected to follow the accountability model of project management, which requires an educational impact evaluation, a process implementation evaluation, and a management plan. An independent audit of the evaluation design and its results is also required.

Title III recommends an emphasis on staff development and use of technical assistance but does not have formally stated requirements.

Because of these differences in the strategies of the Title III, Section 306, and the Right-To-Read programs, there is an opportunity in the reading fieldwork to assess differences in effects on innovative projects. The issues are how these differences affect the initiation, implementation, and continuation processes of the project; the kinds of changes attempted by the project; and the extent of change achieved. Caution is warranted, however, in generalizing from our results because the sample of projects in the reading fieldwork is so small.

Our synthesis of the fieldwork in reading projects will be presented in five major sections. The first section will consider the technology of diagnostic/prescriptive reading and what happens when it is introduced into schools; the second, project initiation; the third, project implementation; the fourth, project continuation; and the fifth, project dissemination.

DIAGNOSTIC/PRESCRIPTIVE READING AND CHANGE

The overwhelming impression from the fieldwork in reading projects is the difficulty and complexity of implementing the intricate technology of diagnostic/prescriptive reading in schools. Although there were many examples of teachers who totally changed their approach to teaching as a result of the reading project, there were only a few instances of schools that were radically transformed. Implementing diagnosis and prescription in reading requires fundamental change in the instructional styles and techniques that teachers are expected to use. The changes are difficult for teachers to make and require complicated arrangements of supporting resources.

Reading Skills

In diagnostic/prescriptive reading, instruction is organized according to a hierarchical sequence of basic skills. Once these skills are defined, it is possible to select reading objectives, to select or develop instructional materials specifically for these objectives, and to select or develop means for diagnostic testing, all of which are essential to the diagnostic/prescriptive approach. As examples of what is meant by a hierarchy of basic reading skills, we present a list in Table 3 that has been developed for use in a commercial reading system.*

One of the important kinds of changes required in implementing the diagnostic/prescriptive approach to reading is greater teacher awareness of specific reading skills, the order in which these should be taught, and how to recognize different reading skill deficiencies. These are the fundamental steps for most teachers to make in adopting the diagnostic/prescriptive approach to reading instruction, and they are difficult for many teachers to make. Many teachers we interviewed seemed vague about essential skills in reading, unsystematic in organizing reading instruction, and tended to be undiscriminating in identifying differences among students' reading difficulties. They tended to perceive students as slow, average, or fast readers, and not to see skill differentials. A basic insight that teachers can gain from the diagnostic/prescriptive approach is that it is possible for both "slow" and "fast" readers in their classrooms to have the same reading skill deficiencies and needs for learning. The kind of change that teachers can experience from adopting the diagnostic/prescriptive approach is indicated by a quotation from one teacher

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*This list has been developed by the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning for the Word Attack component of its reading system, the Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development.

Table 3

BASIC SKILLS IN THE WISCONSIN DESIGN FOR READING SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Level A	Level B	Level C
Listens for rhyming elements Words Phrases and verbs Notices likenesses and differences Pictures Letters and numbers Words and phrases Distinguishes colors Listens for initial consonant sounds	Has sight word vocabulary Follows left-to-right sequence Has phonic skills analysis Consonant sounds Consonant blends Rhyming elements Short vowels Simple consonant digraphs Has structural analysis skills Compound words Contractions Base words and endings Plurals Possessive forms	Has sight word vocabulary Has phonic analysis skills Consonants and variant sounds Consonant blends Vowel sounds Vowel generalizations Has structural analysis skills Base words with prefixes and suffixes More difficult plural forms Distinguishes homonyms, synonyms, and antonyms Homonyms Synonyms and antonyms Has independent and varied word attack skills Chooses appropriate meaning of multiple meaning words

whom we interviewed: "As a result of this project, I now see differences in my kids that I did not see before and how to teach to those differences."

The success of the reading projects in producing this change in teachers was difficult to determine and is hard to summarize. One of the best sources of information was the opinion of reading specialist teachers in the projects, who could identify teachers in their schools who had made a major transition in their approach to reading. Although there are serious problems of definition and validity in the responses of these specialists, the modal number of such transitions by teachers was in the range of three to five (in elementary schools). However, within a project, the number of such transitions reported varied greatly by school. In some schools, there were evidently no teachers greatly changed, and in a few others, almost all teachers were greatly changed. In most schools there were also many other teachers who changed to some lesser degree.

Diagnostic Testing

The most direct way for teachers to determine the reading skill deficiencies of their students is with specially designed diagnostic tests, and all of the projects elected either to purchase commercial tests or to develop them locally. If well trained, teachers can diagnose reading skill deficiencies informally through interpretation of student responses or with teacher-made tests (informal reading inventories), but the more formal approach of using packaged tests appeared to clarify the testing task. Most of the projects also expected the teachers to keep records of student performance on these tests as a means of keeping track of student needs. Some superintendents (particularly in Lindaton and Brickton) saw the test results as a major benefit of the diagnostic/prescriptive approach to reading: Whenever students transferred to a new teacher, their diagnostic profiles could be transferred along with them to give the new teachers an instant picture of their new students' reading abilities.

Judging from the projects we visited, the demands of the diagnostic/prescriptive method for frequent in-class testing generate more teacher resistance than any other aspects of the diagnostic/prescriptive approach. "Test, test, test, is all we do," is a typical reaction; "it takes valuable time away from teaching." Teachers also strenuously object to all the required record-keeping, and we found few teachers in the projects who were doing a careful job of keeping diagnostic profiles unless provided with external support.

Clearly, the test, teach, test, style of teaching, which is required by the diagnostic/prescriptive approach, is not the way teachers teach now. They doubt its efficacy, and they strenuously object to the additional time burden it imposes on their routine. Teachers did not see which other activities should be displaced for this testing and record-keeping. Supporters of diagnosis and prescription argue that record-keeping is not that burdensome (in some projects, teachers had only to punch a few holes in a card for each student after each test) and that the benefits to quality of instruction more than compensate for the costs.

In the projects we visited, testing and record-keeping were implemented to some degree only if records were required and these requirements were enforced (Brickton) and/or if auxiliary services were provided to relieve teachers of the requirements for in-class teaching and/or record-keeping. These auxiliary services were provided in the form of a computerized, control-office-provided test-scoring and record-keeping service (Brickton) or by extra personnel who did the work (Adamston and one school in Rockton).

Instructional Approaches

Another source of resistance to the diagnostic/prescriptive approach is conflict with the existing instructional approaches to reading accepted by teachers. In a review of reading, Reginald Corder* has identified eight different instructional approaches:

- Meaning emphasis
- Code emphasis
    - Phonics
    - Whole word
- Linguistics
- Modified alphabet
- Responsive environment
- Programmed learning
- Individualized reading
- Language experience

These approaches are not highly scientific in prescribing how to teach, but are rather styles of teaching, somewhat distinguishable by what skills are emphasized, in what order these are taught, and how they are presented to children. In the meaning emphasis approach, for example, the rule is that comprehension and interpretation should be included as major goals of instruction from the start, with children introduced at an early stage to whole words and sentences that are as closely geared to their own experiences as possible. In phonics, the emphasis in the early stages of reading is on "code-busting." Learning letter and syllable sounds is emphasized first, building up to word recognition. Comprehension and interpretation are not emphasized at the beginning. Most teachers, however, are not versed in these different instructional approaches, but in their styles of teaching and content emphases behave approximately according to one or more of these approaches.

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*The Information Base for Reading, Educational Testing Service, Berkeley, California, 1971.

In the diagnostic/prescriptive approach, the emphasis is on teaching well-defined basic skills, and many teachers who follow instructional approaches that emphasize higher order reading skills, such as comprehension, that have not been as well defined resist this aspect of the diagnostic/prescriptive method. There were many classroom teachers (and reading teachers) in projects who objected to the basic skills emphasis of the diagnostic/prescriptive approach. "Word attack, word attack, word attack, that's all we teach," one project reading teacher said, "and that's not enough."

The emphasis on basic skills implicit in diagnosis and prescription also creates a related problem, which is a conflict over educational goals. Parents, school administrators, and the public are usually more concerned with how well the children are doing on comprehension and other higher order skills than with the basic skills emphasized in diagnosis and prescription. Because of this factor, there can be opposition to the diagnostic/prescriptive approach if it results in children who can pronounce words but not understand what they are reading. This is exactly what happened in the Adamston project, which emphasized basic skills. In this project, improvements in basic skills were dramatic but comprehension did not change at all, and the district officials were not enthusiastic about the project. Improvement in comprehension was stated as a project goal, but the project evaluator suggested dropping it because he thought the project would not be able to produce comprehension gains in a short period of time. He thought that failing to achieve that goal would discredit the project in the eyes of the community and the administration.

The educational technologist retorts, as did the Adamston project director, that there is no reason why comprehension could not be taught through diagnosis and prescription if we could define it precisely. "But we can't," he asserted, "and we shouldn't try to teach what we don't know how to teach."* Although this is a philosophically defensible position, it is still not acceptable to many people.

There are reading specialists who would argue the opposite position that enough basic skills related to comprehension are known (such as the concept of "get-the-main-idea") to teach through diagnosis and prescription. But these skills are generally less well defined than decoding skills. As evidence, the comprehension component of Wisconsin Design has been much slower in development than the Word Attack component.

Skill Referencing

In addition to defining reading skills and establishing techniques for diagnosis, implementation of the diagnostic/prescriptive approach requires that teachers be provided with a means for selecting reading materials to teach specific skills. Most of the schools had a wealth of commercially published reading materials, both purchased by the project and already available in the schools, and they relied on these in reading programs.

A problem, however, with commercial materials is that publishers do not generally explain what portions of instructional materials are useful in teaching what reading skills. This makes it hard for teachers to select what materials to use to teach particular skills.

Lack of libraries containing skill-referenced reading materials accessible to classroom teachers was a serious problem in two of the four projects we visited that made a serious attempt to implement a sophisticated version of diagnostic/prescriptive reading (Lindaton and Brickton). Both of these projects had a means for skill referencing on the drawing boards, but during the project lifetime were only able to reach the diagnostic stage of implementing the diagnostic/prescriptive approach and fell down on prescription. As a result, it was left to the teachers' own initiative to organize materials for instruction, and few had the time or technical knowledge to do this. Our conclusion is that diagnosis/prescription is an example of an educational innovation where partial implementation is really no implementation at all in terms of the effects on teaching.

Reading Systems

One solution to the problem of providing teachers with references to reading materials was for projects to purchase a commercial reading system or develop one locally, and two of the six school districts in our fieldwork sample (plus one school in Rockton) elected to do this. In addition, one project (Brickton) elected to develop its own reading system. These reading systems consist, at a minimum, of a hierarchy of basic reading skills, instruments for skill testing, a means for recording student test scores, and a reference list of reading materials (and pages in these materials) appropriate for teaching particular skills. In addition, some reading systems provide a catalogued library of reading materials. Several such systems are on the market, and in our fieldwork we ran into three of them: the Wisconsin Design in Lindaton and one school in Rockton, the High Intensity Learning System (HiLinks or HILS) in Adamston, and Fountain Valley in one school in Middleton.*

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*This position is argued forcefully in Carl Bereiter, Must We Educate?, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1973.

The projects and schools within projects that elected to implement a reading system generally achieved much more change than projects that did not. One example is the Adamston project, which included a complex series of instructional materials, specifically selected for teaching a comprehensive set of basic reading and reading readiness skills that were selected according to the latest precepts of educational research. Up to three-quarters of the school day was devoted to instruction from these materials, many of which were programmed for the teacher as well as for the students.

One reason why highly developed reading systems were effective in producing change is that in-service training can be made much more specific and applied directly to the practical details of using the system in the classroom. Consequently, it is easier for teachers to understand what is expected of them. The in-service format of the reading system might direct the teacher as follows: Here are some examples of this skill, here is the test to be used for this skill and how to use it, here are the instructional materials you can use for this skill and how to use them, and so forth. In the Adamston project, the skills and instructional materials were so specific that teachers could be thrown into the new curriculum with only a few days' training. As teachers encountered specific problems, resource persons were available to give them immediate assistance. Another example is the Lindaton project, where teachers generally reported that the in-service workshops were much better in the third year of the project. These workshops trained teachers to use parts of the Wisconsin Design, whereas workshops in the two previous years covered such topics as individualizing instructions, auditory-visual problems in word learning, and application of informal reading inventories.

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*The Fountain Valley reading system appeared, however, to have been adopted independently of the Right-To-Read project.

A second reason why reading systems were effective is that they provided a technological inducement to change in the form of the skill definitions, tests, and specified instructional materials. If the teachers accepted the reading system or were in some way forced to use it, they were led into behavioral change. In the words of the Adamston project director, teachers in his project become "managers of the classroom environment and of the materials, with much of the therapeutic learning process transferred from the teacher to the materials that have been designed to achieve therapeutic outcomes."

A third reason for effectiveness was that many reading systems require corollary changes in school organization, further influencing the teacher's physical environment. The Wisconsin Design, for example, imposes a burden on teachers that makes implementation difficult unless relief is provided through some form of intra- or cross-grade grouping. Another example is the Adamston project, where intra-grade grouping is extreme: Students move from classroom to classroom every 15 to 30 minutes for two and a half hours of the school day, requiring the teachers to keep on schedule in order to maintain the system.

The potential importance of fully developed reading systems to implementing the diagnostic/prescriptive approach is also indicated by other activities in the districts we visited. In Rockton, a citywide effort to implement the Wisconsin Design was under way at district expense and will continue for several years. In Lindaton, the superintendent has mandated implementation of the Wisconsin Design in all of the district schools as a continuation of the project that we visited. In Brickton, the district has under way citywide implementation of the reading system developed in the project. In the Adamston project, HILS and DISTAR were the main reading components; and Middleton, the only school taking specific steps in reading, was implementing Fountain Valley, although not as part of Right-To-Read. In the Baker project, there was no trace of a commercial reading system. In summary, out of the six projects that we visited, citywide implementation of a commercial reading system was under way in two (Rockton and Lindaton) and of a locally developed reading system in a third (Brickton).

Reading Teachers

Five of the six projects we visited decided to hire or include specialist reading teachers for the schools in the project. (In the Right-To-Read projects, this was contrary to the idea that a reading improvement project should be implemented with existing resources.) The roles of these reading teachers varied, but generally they served as change agents in their respective schools. They organized in-service training sessions, often ran a reading resource center, sought out willing teachers to work with them on implementing diagnosis and prescription, and consulted with them on problems encountered in the classroom. There appears to be great need for a resource person to whom teachers can go for assistance in implementing diagnosis and prescription. All the projects we visited included formal in-service training, but this appeared to serve the function of exposing teachers to the changes they were expected to make rather than training them how to make changes. Actual change to the diagnostic/prescriptive approach appears to occur through on-the-job, in-class experiences, which can be successfully provided only if there is a resource person in the school.

Outside consultants, either from the district office or the project staff, were less effective. Reading teachers in the projects we visited emphasized that a resource person had to establish personal rapport with the teachers before he could be effective, and this requires someone who actually works in the school. Also, the resource person needs to handle teachers' problems as they arise -- at lunch or during school hours -- and this function cannot be performed as well by an outsider who is in the school only infrequently.

The reading resource person has to be able to work with teachers, and many whom we interviewed said that most reading teachers do not have this skill. The districts we visited have large numbers of full-time reading teachers (Rockton, for example, has more than 200 for 130 schools), but they are mostly remedial reading teachers, who function out of the classroom as tutors for low-achieving students. These teachers often have little classroom experience and have a difficult time making the transition to the reading resource mode. In one project (Lindaton), which was specifically designed to train reading resource teachers for the district, only 6 of the 13 trainees* who started the program made the transition to reading resource person and two of these had previous experience as resource teachers in other subject areas. The rest were dropped out of the project and went back into the schools as remedial reading teachers or into some other position. Another example is Rockton, where two of the four reading teachers initially selected from within the district were unable to make the transition to the reading resource mode.

The school districts we visited did not uniformly staff projects with the most competent reading teachers available or select the best teachers in the district to become reading teachers. In many cases, the reading project provided a chance to place someone who was unable to perform well in other positions. For example, the Lindaton project hired about one-third (5) of the group of reading teacher trainees from outside the district and transferred the rest from inside the district. Of those from inside the district, only three (37 percent) made the transition to a reading resource teacher (including two who had previous experience as resource persons), while three (60 percent) from the outside made the transition.

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*Two other reading teachers were included from nonpublic schools inside the district.

This situation, if generally true, has important implications for federal programs designed to channel money to the schools for reading. Judging from the results of our fieldwork, there may be a tendency for school districts, because of staffing pressures, to use reading money as an extra source of funds for reassigning district staff and not to staff reading improvement efforts with the best people--an organizational factor difficult to counteract from the federal level.

PROJECT INITIATION

The six projects in the reading fieldwork were selected because of several common characteristics: from the project proposals, all were thought to be implementing a total approach to diagnostic/prescriptive reading, and for the Right-To-Read projects, to be following a school-based problem-solving strategy. But, as Table 4 shows, there were many deviations in the projects from these characteristics.

Effects of the Right-To-Read Guidelines

A major question is how effective Right-To-Read's project support strategy was in influencing projects to follow the basic philosophy of conducting a process of school-based problem solving to implement a total approach to diagnostic/prescriptive reading.

A firm conclusion, one way or the other, is difficult to make because it is impossible to know what the four Right-To-Read projects would have been in the absence of the guidelines, but as summarized in Table 4, two of the projects (Rockton and Brickton) chose to implement some form of diagnostic/prescriptive reading and engaged in problem-solving activity in ways closely paralleling the details of the Right-To-Read guidelines. In comparison, the two Title III projects that attempted to implement a total approach to diagnostic/prescriptive reading did not come even close to the Right-To-Read problem-solving model. And, the fact that only 2 of the 39 urban, multischool reading projects elected to implement a total approach to diagnosis and prescription suggests even more strongly that the

Table 4

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

Category	Right-To-Read Projects				Title III, Section 306 Projects	
	Rockton	Middleton	Adamston	Brickton	Lindaton	Baker
Diagnostic/prescriptive reading	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Total approach						
Complete reading system	Partial	--	Yes	Yes	No[a]	No
Other components	Yes	--	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
All grades in each school	K, 1, 2, 3	Yes	K, 1, 2	Yes	Yes	Yes
All teachers in each grade	Most	Most	Yes	Most	Some	Some
Number of schools	4	3	2	10	9	Many
Problem-solving approach	Yes	No[b]	No	Yes	No	No
School-based approach	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

[a] In the third year, this project switched to implementing Wisconsin Design.

[b] There was problem solving to the extent that project monies were used to conduct workshops in which teachers' problems were discussed, but the project apparently did not conduct the Right-To-Read needs assessment and planning process.

Right-To-Read guidelines had some effect because 3 of the 4 Right-To-Read projects were in this category. Thus, the Right-To-Read guidelines appear to have some effect on project activities.

The power of the Right-To-Read guidelines is apparently limited, however, because two projects deviated substantially from the Right-To-Read guidelines in certain ways. One of these was clearly the Middleton project, in which funds were used for purposes other than for reading. The school district had decided before Right-To-Read money became available to establish open-structure classrooms in several schools and used Right-To-Read money in three of them to facilitate the conversion. In another Right-To-Read project (Adamston), funds were used to implement an existing federal project in two additional schools, with the schools having little choice in the matter. Therefore, there was no problem solving.

A third Right-To-Read project (Brickton) also deviated from the guidelines in conducting problem solving at the district rather than at the school level. This project, however, attempted a substantially more ambitious degree of change.

Degree of Change Attempted

The changes attempted by the six reading projects, which are summarized in Table 5, suggest that projects following the school-based approach tended to attempt less ambitious change than other kinds of projects. In Rockton, for example, the attempted change in three of the schools was a new basal text (different ones were adopted in each school) containing diagnostic/prescriptive features but at a modest level of sophistication. Previously, schools had allowed teachers to choose their own texts, and as a result a number of different reading texts were used in each school. Now, there is one basic text in each school. In Middleton, it was hard to specify what changes were attempted except that project funds were used (differently in each school) to support teachers in converting to open-space classrooms, a decision made before Right-To-Read money became available.* In the other reading projects, the decisions on what changes to make resided more with the central project staff or the district administration, and, as Table 5 indicates, apparently they were bolder about attempting reading change.

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*One other (Right-To-Read) school-based, problem-solving project that we visited as a fieldwork pretest attempted essentially the same changes as the Rockton project and achieved similar results, providing further support to our conclusions.

Table 5

ATTEMPTED CHANGES IN READING PROJECTS

Projects	Changes
School-Based Projects	
Rockton Right-To-Read	Each school attempted different changes, but generally adopted new basal texts incorporating simple diagnostic/prescriptive techniques. Also, a reading resource center in one school was to be duplicated in the other project schools. One school attempted full implementation of the word attack component of Wisconsin Design.
Middleton	Funds were to be used to ease the transition to open-space schools.
Other Projects	
Lindaton	Development of a series of workshops for training reading teachers and a "delivery system" for in-class follow-up to implement diagnostic/prescriptive reading in all (nine) district schools.
Adamston	Implementation in two additional schools of a complex reading and reading readiness system that had been developed by the project director over a three-year period in several other district schools.
Brickton	Development and full citywide implementation of a complete diagnostic/prescriptive reading system.
Baker	Development of a series of workshops for training teachers in diagnostic/prescriptive reading and a "delivery system" for in-class follow-up to achieve implementation Implementation to be in many schools in seven neighboring districts.

Needs Assessment

As a stage in project initiation, Right-To-Read expected each school in a project to perform a detailed needs assessment and provided a detailed step-by-step kit for projects to follow. The results of needs assessment were to be the basis for the project's proposed plan of change. The assessment was to be performed by a Unit Task Force, which was supposed to consist of the school principal, two teachers, two parents, and the school librarian (optional).

In practice, the composition of Unit Task Forces varied greatly. Two were constituted according to the Right-To-Read model, while the other two had only parents as members. One (Adamston) had 20 members.

The Unit Task Forces generally found it too difficult to conduct needs assessment, and projects soon turned this responsibility over to the project reading teacher or to a committee of school personnel. Principals were rarely involved in these committees, but did occasionally meet with school staff to review progress and discuss results. Most principals had some familiarity with needs assessment and generally thought it was a good idea. Most parents found needs assessment unintelligible and contributed little to collecting information and decisionmaking. After some initial meetings, most Unit Task Forces had little subsequent involvement in the projects.

The Middleton project apparently made no serious attempt at needs assessment, which is consistent with the way the project used its funds.

Needs assessments did not appear to lead to decisions that were a radical departure from trends already under way in the district or in the school, or to decisions that were not in line with the previous experiences of planning group members. For example, if there was a person on the planning group who was strong in the area of early childhood education, the project was likely to focus on the primary grades; or if people on the planning group believed phonics was important, the curriculum choices were weighted toward phonics. None of this is surprising, but it seems useful to point out that needs assessment does not appear to produce dramatic policy change.

Nevertheless, respondents uniformly praised needs assessment. When pressed, almost all would say that the Right-To-Read needs assessment (and planning procedure) is the "right way" to plan a reading improvement program, even though, in some cases, their projects seemed to belie such a statement. The Right-To-Read approach, with its emphasis on collecting student achievement and teacher skill data as a basis for program planning, on assessing existing resources, and on specifying the resources needed to implement a new reading program is certainly a departure from the ways that most schools make curriculum improvements in reading.

Some respondents felt that needs assessment provided a valuable overview of the diagnostic/prescriptive approach to reading improvement. "It sets the stage," one respondent said. "With needs assessment, you don't feel like you're thrown into it." Needs assessment appeared to function in this way by showing the schools what some skills were, how materials could be used selectively to teach these skills, and how a complex arrangement of resources was needed to implement fully diagnostic/prescriptive reading. Needs assessment also provided a mechanism for involving school personnel in planning and implementing reading curriculum improvements that some thought were beneficial. It was necessary for several people to be involved in data collection and deciding what the project would be. Members of the school staff who seldom talked with each other or with their school administration about substantive issues were suddenly brought into communication with each other.

A few principals used needs assessment as a change agent mechanism by showing the results to individual teachers who were found to be weak in the area of reading instruction compared with their colleagues. These principals thought that when faced with these data, the teachers would be encouraged to put more effort into learning how to teach reading.

In summary, needs assessment had little direct effect on project decisionmaking, but numerous side benefits and indirect effects.

The Role of the Superintendent

The six case studies indicate how important the superintendent's active support is to the initiation of a diagnostic/prescriptive reading project, because we found no clear instances in which teachers or principals were active in initiating the reading project or saw a definite need for it. We did find, however, two superintendents who were actively involved in initiating their reading projects (Lindaton and Brickton), and these two projects were among the four that attempted major change. There was little support from the superintendents during initiation in the two districts that attempted the least change (Rockton and Middleton).

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

As Table 5 shows, the reading projects we visited generally failed to implement the anticipated changes. Many of the reasons for failure were similar to those in other projects in the Rand study and are discussed in the main text of this report, but some are more peculiar to diagnostic/prescriptive reading.

Implemented Change

Except for the Adamston project, which achieved full implementation and was dramatically successful, the overall pattern in the reading projects was that a few teachers in each project school were using in some form the diagnostic/prescriptive approach to reading, while many other teachers were affected in minor ways.

There appears to be a tradeoff between the school-based approach to change in reading and more centralized change efforts. With school-based problem solving, our fieldwork data suggest that, although less significant changes are attempted, a higher proportion of these changes are implemented (compare Tables 5 and 6). Evidently, the changes attempted are more attuned to perceived school needs, and in the process of problem solving, greater commitment to and understanding of the changes to be made develop. With the centralized approach to change, our fieldwork data suggest that more significant changes are attempted but that a lower proportion are implemented. With more intensive effort at implementation, there is a potential for the centralized projects to produce much more significant institutionalized change.

Adaptations

Although our sample of projects is small, our fieldwork strongly suggests that the problem-solving approach of the Right-To-Read guidelines reduces the severity of adaptations during implementation. The evidence is that while both of the Title III, Section 306 projects underwent extreme adaptations in project objectives and activities, the two Right-To-Read projects that engaged in problem solving (Rockton and Brickton) had stable objectives and minor changes in activities.

Development and Implementation

One factor that helped prevent implementation in some projects was that staff members tried to implement an innovation at the same time as they were developing it and did not realize the magnitude of the development task they were undertaking. This situation is clearest in Brickton, where staff members decided to develop their own complete reading system and a series of training workshops at the same time that they were implementing their designs in the schools. But when the development task turned out to be far more difficult than expected, staff effort had to be diverted from implementation activities to improving the reading system components. As a result, implementation lagged. Another problem was that as bugs were discovered in the reading system and training program, changes had to be made in the project schools, and these were expensive in terms of staff effort and loss of confidence in the project among principals and teachers.

Table 6

READING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION OUTCOMES

Projects	Implementation Outcomes
School-Based Projects	
Rockton (Right-To-Read)	New basal texts incorporating a simple diagnostic/prescriptive system adopted in three schools. Some skill grouping. Reading resource centers improved in two schools. Learning centers introduced into some classrooms. High school tutoring added to one school. Full implementation of word attack component of Wisconsin Design including cross-grade skill grouping in the fourth school.
Middleton (Right-To-Read)	Workshops on teaching in open-space schools conducted. Project staff consulted with teachers on classroom problems. Few effects on reading instruction were observed.
Other Projects	
Adamston (Right-To-Read)	Full implementation of the reading and reading readiness system.
Lindaton (Title III)	Six reading teachers trained. These reading teachers trained a few teachers in the diagnostic/prescriptive method in each district school. Generally, the project failed in its original objective. In the third year of the project, the original project goals were changed by the superintendent to implementation of the Wisconsin Design reading system. Only break-in testing was completed.
Brickton (Right-To-Read)	Complete reading system for citywide use developed but not completely implemented. Diagnostic testing partially implemented in ten project schools. Prescription not implemented in these schools.
Baker (Title III)	Workshops in diagnostic/prescriptive reading provided to hundreds of teachers in seven surrounding school districts. Original plan to provide follow-up into classrooms failed. Subsequent plan to introduce reading resource centers in the schools largely failed. Tutoring to low-achieving students became the most significant implemented component of the project.

In contrast, the Adamston project director had developed and perfected his reading system over a period of three years before the start of the Right-To-Read project, understood how it worked and how to explain it to others, and knew what type of resistance he would face and how to deal with it. Consequently, he was able to concentrate on implementation and needed to make only minor adjustments in his innovation.

The Lindaton and Baker projects also started from scratch to develop innovations; in the case of Lindaton, it was a training program for reading teachers and a reading system, and in the case of Baker, it was a "delivery system" for implementing diagnostic/prescriptive reading in a large number of schools in several districts. At the same time, both projects started delivering services to schools, and when they ran into problems the developmental effort deteriorated. Neither project managed to develop its own coherent diagnostic/prescriptive innovation.

Total Approach

Right-To-Read emphasizes the importance of a total approach as essential to implementing diagnostic/prescriptive reading. We can get a further idea of what this approach can mean by listing the components of the Adamston project:

- Removal of individual desks from classrooms.
- Multiple instructional components: two directly related to reading, others related to reading readiness.
- A grouping strategy where students move from room to room throughout the school day.
- A wealth of instructional materials (over 20 different programs) matched to each component and selected for specific purposes.
- Instructional materials stored in space provided in the classroom and catalogued for use.
- Media and learning centers in classrooms.
- A reading center for intensive drill in reading skills and staffed by a reading teacher and an aide.
- Involvement of all teachers at each grade level in the project, plus a number of specialist teachers.
- Classroom aides, specifically trained in the instructional materials and assigned to specific teaching tasks.
- In-service training for teachers in instructional materials used in the project.

- A resource person in each school readily accessible to teachers for help and advice.
- An evaluation system to check on process implementation by teachers.
- Diagnostic testing performed by specialist teachers.
- A system for recording student scores and upgrading them to reflect progress.
- Regular meetings with teachers to discuss problems.
- A specific, high-quality, and yet simple, project evaluation design.

An almost as long a list of components could be given for the Brickton project, which, of the projects we visited, came the next closest to Adamston in implementing a sophisticated version of the diagnostic/prescriptive approach in the project schools.

It is noticeable that no single commercial reading system provides more than a few of these components, nor could more be supplied. The resulting package would be so cumbersome and complex as to be almost impossible to implement.

The thesis behind Right-To-Read's emphasis on a total approach is that there are no simple solutions to the problem of improving reading achievement. The usual approach in schools is to look for a "teaching method" (i.e., an instructional approach) that will "solve" the reading problem, or to do simple things such as involving parents in the classroom or peer tutoring, but the evidence to date is that none of these measures alone will prove superior. And, since many different teaching methods and classroom techniques have been developed and tried over a long period of time, it is not likely that significantly better or simpler methods are going to be found in the near future. To get further improvements in reading, more complex changes, involving the application of more resources and more emphasis on reading, may have to be made. This is the idea behind the total approach to reading, as exemplified by the Right-To-Read strategy.

There is a catch in this, however, because complex changes are likely to be very hard to implement, as witness the many implementation problems in the projects that we visited. These complexities included the need for teachers to learn complicated arrays of basic skills, how to group students for instruction, how to use multiple instructional aids (learning centers, instructional materials, paraprofessional aides, and so forth), and how to coordinate prescriptions with diagnoses.

Role of the Principal

Right-To-Read also emphasizes the importance of the principal as the key change agent in the school, and our fieldwork confirms that, indeed, the leadership of the principal is important in how much a project accomplishes in a school. The principal's leadership seemed even more important than the socioeconomic characteristics of the school population. We visited several schools in poor neighborhoods where the principal was a strong supporter of the project, and the project had had at least as much, if not more, effect as in schools in the same project in wealthier neighborhoods where the principals were not as supportive.

Because of the small sample size of our fieldwork, there is no way of characterizing the "most effective" principal, but we observed a number of ways that principals could be supportive. A few principals took the lead in planning the project and encouraging the adoption of bolder changes.* It was important that the principal assigned the most capable people in the school to key project positions. All supportive principals backed the project strongly when faced with teacher resistance. If teachers complained about the reading teacher, for example, the principal would never undercut the reading teacher.

Unfortunately, the idea of making the principal the project director is not a strong policy lever for making supportive principals out of principals who are not already strong leaders of their schools. The supportive principals were strong educational leaders (or managers) and had been innovative in the past. Thus, we know the role of the principal is the key to successful implementation, but we don't know in general how to use demonstration projects to change principals.

Changing principals will often be a tactical rather than a strategic problem in a project. For example, in one project, the superintendent and the staff perceived one of the school principals as strongly resistant to the project and applied pressure in several ways to make him change, including a meeting in the superintendent's office. When we interviewed this principal, it turned out that the teachers in his school (who were senior in the school district) thought that what the school needed was a remedial reading teacher and not a reading resource teacher, as the project wanted to provide. (The slow readers may have been more obstreperous than other students, and remedial reading was a good way to get them out of the classroom.) The principal was new to the school when the project started, and had never been a principal before. In his first year on the job, he had to choose between supporting his teachers by insisting on a remedial reading teacher and winning their support, and supporting the project and possibly losing his teachers. He chose his teachers and in supporting their position eventually got labeled as a resister by the central project staff. After two years, the district realized the problem and provided a remedial reading teacher.* Now, the principal strongly supports the project. The incident illustrates how vague the term resistance is and how dealing with resistance may call for some specific maneuvering.

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*In some schools, the vice principal was the real leader.

Technical Assistance

To foster implementation, Right-To-Read tried the unique idea of contracting with teams of technical assistants to provide advice and in-service to projects. Ideally, the technical assistants were to visit the projects periodically and to be on call for telephone conversations. In practice, the assistants have had only a marginal influence on the projects (see Table 7). Of the four Right-To-Read projects that we visited, the technical assistant was highly praised only in the Rockton project. He visited each school in the project a few times to talk with school staff and gave some in-service sessions. He also informed the project staff at the district level of weaknesses in the project, and in particular of the poor performance of two of the project reading teachers. On this basis the project staff asked the principals in these schools for a change in reading teachers, which was done. Other Right-To-Read technical assistants also visited the Rockton project but were not praised by the staff.

The record of technical assistants hired by projects, rather than those provided by Right-To-Read, was not significantly better. In Adamston, a consultant hired by the project played a major role in technical decisions, but otherwise projects either did not choose to contract with outside technical assistants or did not find them useful.

It is impossible to generalize from the few cases that we observed why technical assistants are not more useful to the projects, but we can list some of the reasons given by project personnel:

- Too Academic: Some technical assistants cannot give teachers much help with ordinary classroom problems, which must be overcome before sophisticated techniques can be tried. For example, teachers need assistance in figuring out how to keep the rest of the classroom busy while they are working with a small group before they feel secure

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*A new reading resource teacher was also assigned.

Table 7

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFECTS

Project	Impact
Rockton (Right-To-Read)	One Right-To-Read technical assistant was given high marks. He visited the project periodically for consultations, gave project staff feedback on how the project was going in each school, which led to some incremental changes (two reading teachers replaced) and hence to project improvements. Other Right-To-Read technical assistants who visited the project were not given as high marks.
Middleton (Right-To-Read)	No technical assistance used.
Adamston (Right-To-Read)	The Right-To-Read technical assistant objected to the philosophy and approach of the project. A meeting was held with the federal program officer who decided that no changes should be made because the government should not dictate to local projects. He thought the project was well managed and effective. Consultants hired by the project were of major assistance to the project director in making technical decisions (what components to include and suggestions for instructional materials).
Brickton (Right-To-Read)	The Right-To-Read technical assistant, a local professor, assisted the project in developing its reading system.
Lindaton (Title III)	The local professor hired in the project was released; too academic for the project.
Baker (Title III)	Most project personnel had strong ties to the local university.

in trying skill grouping. Also, some technical assistants spend more time than necessary on esoterica when a more pragmatic approach is needed. For example, a technical assistant on one project spent several training sessions on in-depth interpretation of readability tests, her specialty.

- Too Remote: Technical assistants are never around when projects need them and, as one principal said, "Telephone calls are no substitute for face-to-face conversation. They don't know our problems like local people do."

- Conflicting Advice: There can be a problem of conflicting advice when a project has more than one technical assistant. One respondent said, "One technical assistant says one thing and another says something else. It's confusing."
- Personality Differences: Barriers to communication may arise from personality clashes between the project staff and the technical assistant.

We would also speculate that school personnel, and especially reading teachers who pride themselves on professionalism, are not particularly amenable to the passing visit of an outside academic expert who comes to put the house in order. Good technical assistants are special persons, able to establish rapport with teachers and specialist staff, and to help them with their pragmatic as well as technical problems.

CONTINUATION

The prognosis for continuation of the reading projects we visited is summarized in Table 8. In three projects, formal project activities will probably collapse if federal funds are withdrawn, leaving only whatever behavioral changes that principals, reading teachers, and classroom teachers have internalized. In the other projects, particularly Brickton and Lindaton, district support seems strong enough to ensure continuation.

In both Brickton and Lindaton, the superintendents strongly support continued citywide implementation, and certainly represent the decisive factor in continuation. They believe in the efficacy of systematizing reading instruction and value the potential side benefits of diagnostic/prescriptive reading in cutting down on the range of reading materials used in their schools and in otherwise alleviating the student transfer problem by making available student profile sheets. Neither project has yet shown significant gains in reading achievement test scores, although this is not surprising since they have not been implemented fully in the project schools. Continued support may result in more implementation and higher reading scores. It is notable that a reading system is a major component of both of these projects.

Neither the Rockton nor the Middleton projects are likely to be continued when federal funds are withdrawn. The superintendents in these two districts have never actively supported their projects.

The Adamston project is not likely to be continued either unless additional federal funds are obtained, even though it was highly successful. As discussed earlier, district officials say that they would support the project for expansion to

Table 8

CONTINUATION OF READING PROJECTS

Project	Likely Continuations
Rockton	Reading teachers will continue to be employed by the district and may or may not be transferred to other schools. Formal project activities will collapse in these schools; however, none of these activities is critical to continuation of the implemented change. Operation of Wisconsin Design will continue in the fourth school at district or other federal project expense. These expenses are critical to continuation of the implemented change.
Middleton	No continuation of project activities expected.
Adamston	With new federal support, the project will continue. Without new federal support, the project will probably collapse because the district is unlikely to pick up the extra expense of the project.
Brickton	The superintendent plans to continue citywide implementation with federal funds, if these are received, or at district expense.
Lindaton	The superintendent has mandated continued implementation of Wisconsin Design in all district schools at district expense. Some of the teacher-training workshops developed by the project will be operated as demonstrations if support is obtained from Title III, Section 306. Reading teachers trained by the project will continue to be employed in the district, some probably on other federal projects.
Baker	The project grant has two more years.

other schools in the district if it could show significant gains in reading achievement. The project has shown dramatic gains in reading readiness skills and reading decoding skills, but not in the reading tests used by the district.

Further, below the surface, there appear to be other factors at work in preventing the spread of the Adamston project. One is race; the school district is highly politicized over the black/white issue and the project director is white. Another factor is the personality of the project director, who is strong-willed, forceful, and not bashful about confronting teachers. But he is also unusually skilled in the areas of child development and reading. All these qualities go a long way toward explaining why the project has been so successful, but they also have negative effects on the continuation and dissemination of the project in the district. Two other factors, related to the conflict over goals, are the instructional methods of the project, which are highly structured and directed, and the assumption of the project that poor children need training in perceptual motor skills not needed by middle-class children. In the past some have seen a disabilities model in this approach and react strongly to it.

The high cost of the Adamston project is probably also a factor, although district officials say that they could and would support the project if it showed achievement gains. The cost is high because of the three extra specialist teachers in each school who are essential to the project's operation. The project director claims that available district and federal funds (mostly Title I) are sufficient in most schools to support the project. As evidence, he says that the project is institutionalized in four district schools, and that this was done by juggling the allocation of district and Title I funds. The district has several hundred dollars per student of Title I funds.

There is an important question of what parts of the Adamston project are necessary to continue teacher behavior at full implementation. The project is operating in four other schools (where implementation was initially achieved with a Title III grant) without federal funds, and remains largely implemented in three of them. The project director says that the primary reason why the project is still operating in the four schools is because the assistant superintendent for elementary education provided funds to continue the specialist teachers. The project director also says that the reason why the project is more fully implemented in three of these schools is that the process evaluation system designed to monitor teacher behavior has been continued. In the fourth school, the process evaluation system has broken down, and the teachers have been slipping back to their old behavior patterns. This is potentially a fundamental result and indicates that continued application of external behavior controls is required to maintain the diagnostic/prescriptive approach. The implication is that the diagnostic/prescriptive approach requires extra teacher energy that cannot be assimilated by transition to a routine behavior. In other words, diagnosis and prescription require permanent extra work.

DISSEMINATION

Of the projects that we visited, only the Brickton project had had much contact with any schools outside the district, and even these were largely limited to letter requests for copies of the diagnostic test that the project had developed. These requests were stimulated by an article about the Brickton project in a newsletter regularly published for the Right-To-Read program by the International Reading Association. None of the reading projects made any attempt to publicize their work outside their home district.

One other dissemination activity in the projects that we visited was in the Lindaton project where some of the teacher-training workshops developed may be operated as demonstrations if the district receives a fourth-year grant from the Section 306 program.

Part of the Right-To-Read model for projects was that one of the schools should be designated as an "impact site," which meant a school that already had an effective reading program and, therefore, could help the other schools in the project to improve their reading programs. This idea did not work at all. We did not find one case where the school designated as the impact site provided any substantial assistance to the other project schools and only one school that picked up one idea from an impact school. That idea was to establish a reading resource center.

The two general reasons for the lack of interaction were that the impact schools were not very exemplary to begin with and that the non-impact schools were not particularly interested in being helped. When we asked principals why their schools had been selected as impact sites, the response was typically that they had been surprised by the choice. One principal said, "When we looked closely at our program, we couldn't see why we were chosen." The reluctance of schools to work with an impact site appears to stem from unwillingness to admit that maybe another school is doing a better job. Interschool differences are also a problem; schools in low socioeconomic neighborhoods have different problems, needs, and style than those in middle-class neighborhoods.

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ADAMSTON

Todd I. Endo

Adamston has long been a center for highway, rail, and transportation and is a major northeastern distributing point for many of the nation's leading products. Its population of 400,000 has decreased in the last ten years as the gulf widens between the decaying, violence (often racial)-prone inner city and the well-developed but disinterested suburbs.

The Adamston Right-To-Read project is the only one in the field visit reading sample that attempted to implement an entirely new instructional system, the Informational Processing Model, in all classrooms at the specified grade levels in the project schools. The other projects were for more general staff development, advocated much less major change in teacher behavior, or involved only volunteer classrooms. Thus the Adamston Right-To-Read project attempted the greatest degree of change and was the most comprehensive in the sample.

The project is also the most structured for both teachers and students. Teacher and student behavior are tightly controlled by the project model and by the active intervention of the project director. Teachers are directed to follow a detailed curriculum in a tightly packed, organized schedule. Students follow a teacher-directed curriculum, whose reading component features the DISTAR program. Neither teachers nor students are allowed to deviate from the curriculum or the schedule to pursue their own interests for the two and a half hours of the school day that the project occupies.

On the spectrum from development to implementation, the project is close to the implementation end. The Informational Processing Model, which is the basis of the project, was developed and largely perfected under two previous federal grants. In the Right-To-Read project, the model has been expanded to two additional schools and somewhat modified. From our brief observation, the project appears to have been fully implemented -- in spite of the initial objections of some teachers -- and to have achieved impressive student gains on the designated criterion tests. On the basis of a brief visit, this project is the most successful of the ones in the sample and among the most interesting.

The project is the brainchild of its project director and is obviously an extension of his ideas, personality, style, and leadership. One wonders what would have happened if someone else had tried to implement the model.

PROJECT INITIATION

Like other big city Right-To-Read projects, Adamston was notified by Right-To-Read in late 1971 that it had been awarded a three-year grant of $100, 000 per year to design and administer a reading project. In January 1972 Adamston was given a $10, 000 planning grant and asked to submit a proposed operating plan.

Adamston's Response

The major initial decisions concerning the Right-To-Read project were made by the deputy superintendent. At first, he intended to build the Right-To-Read project around the person and work of a former teacher who had become known for his method of teaching reading. He had developed his method of teaching reading while he was a teacher in Adamston, but had left the district when he could not find support for his work. The deputy superintendent had visited his classrooms, was impressed by his methods and success, and hoped to bring him back to head the Right-To-Read project. But when these plans were discussed with the Right-To-Read office, they were refused. Right-To-Read insisted that the model used at the impact site must already be in existence in the school district.

As a result, the deputy superintendent began to search for alternatives. The assistant superintendent for special education and the district's federal program manager recommended the Informational Processing Model, which had been operating in Adamston schools for several years under federal grants. The deputy superintendent had never heard of the model, and initially thought that it was not focused enough on reading, but was soon persuaded otherwise. Ultimately, he recommended the model to the school board, which approved it as the basis of the Right-To-Read project in February 1972.

Meanwhile, he had also selected the schools to be included in the project. These were Washington School, Madison School, and Emerson School. Emerson School, designated as the impact school, was a site where the model had been operating for three years. In the Right-To-Read project, however, Emerson has been an impact site in name only because no one from the school has been involved in the project. Washington School, a low socioeconomic school with a Title I program, was selected as the redirection site, and Madison School as the transition site. Madison is in a relatively middle-class area of Adamston, and parents had been complaining vigorously that their school had not been receiving its share of funds from the school district. According to some people we talked with, the district started a Right-To-Read project and a Title I project in this school because of this pressure. The principals in these schools were notified, not consulted, about their involvement in the Right-To-Read project. One principal said she was notified late one afternoon to attend a Right-To-Read meeting in Washington the next day.

Finally, the deputy superintendent selected the project director in the spring.

The Unit Task Force

The principals of each of the schools selected the unit task force members in March 1972. In each school, the unit task force was a large, loose confederation of the school's Title I board, the PTA, and volunteer parents. According to the project director, the unit task force in each school diligently went through the Right-To-Read planning process and discussed the Informational Processing Model with him. He concedes that the needs assessment and objectives written by the unit task forces have not affected how the project developed, but he claims that the process was important for the purpose of informing a group of parents about the Informational Processing Model (a highly unorthodox approach to reading), gaining their confidence, and winning their active support.

Trouble with the School Board

In the late spring or early summer, members of the school board began expressing opposition to the director and his project. After a visit to the project and a conversation with the director, the president of the school board became convinced that the director did not believe that black children could learn and objected strongly to this. Another board member accused the project and particularly DISTAR components of using Pavlovian methods. But the anti-black accusation was the most important. The new superintendent interviewed a number of other persons to replace the project director and tried to persuade him to step down. However, the deputy superintendent, other assistant superintendents and school officials, the principals of some of the schools, and members of the community supported him. The board finally supported him and the project but gave its final approval only in September 1972. This delayed the actual beginning of full classroom activities until December 1972 because of late hiring of personnel and ordering of materials. Implementation was slowed, but not seriously disrupted.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Historical Development

The project director originated his system under an ESEA Title VI grant (early education for the handicapped) in January 1969. The initial project was intended for normal urban poor children, but because of the Title VI identification and the basic instructional approach, many saw the project as one for mentally handicapped children, which contributed to accusations that the project was based on a deficit model of black learning ability. The project director has spent a lot of time explaining his project to school board members and the community, but now believes that it is well understood and accepted. When the Title VI funds expired, the director continued the project under a Title III, Section 306 grant. As the Right-To-Read project was beginning, the system was functioning in four schools.

A Brief Description of the Informational Processing Model

The Right-To-Read project monitor claims that the Adamston Right-To-Read project is the best specified one in the country. It is clear from talking with the director and from reading the voluminous materials that he has written and accumulated that he has read the research in the field; constructed a model based on previous research that he believes will provide better instruction for children in the early grades; specified the objectives, components, materials, instructional process, means of assessment, and management processes in considerable detail; and refined the model on the basis of field experience and evaluation results.

Basic Approach. The project director believes that urban poor children enter school with cognitive processing needs that inhibit them from learning to their full potential. He believes that supplying these needs is the paramount job of early elementary education, and all else must be of secondary importance. In support of his approach, he cites Carl Bereiter's book, Must We Educate? and defends skills teaching against what he terms child care or creative education. He is not adamantly opposed to such approaches for some students, but he does insist that with limited time they are "frills" in the education of urban poor children. He favors a structured, directed teaching mode of instruction.

The director organizes instruction in this model systematically. He disdains what he terms the "I think, I feel" approach to education, which does not specify objectives and criterion tests and thus cannot be proved right or wrong on the basis of data. He also criticizes piecemeal approaches to change in instruction, such as those that promote a specific method of teaching reading. Instead, he believes that the only way to organize change in instruction is through a systems approach. He defines a system as:

- A totality of elements in interaction with each other.
- A type of structure which functions in the form of a definite sequence of operations.
- The structure or organization of an orderly whole, clearly showing the interrelations of the parts to each other and the whole itself.

The director has a large chart describing the components of his project and their interrelations, which vividly illustrates how his project fits together and is derived from principles of cognitive theory.

The Informational Processing Model. The project director outlines the Informational Processing Model as follows: This model is used as the basis of the diagnostic-instructional process in the classroom. The model is based on cybernetic, communication theory, neuropsychology, and neurophysiology. It is a synthesis of the works of Osgood, Wepman, Kirk, Myklebust, Climents, Pribram, Piaget, and Bruner. This model is an open system based on human development and learning and is organized to facilitate the development of a diagnostic-instructional system for use in elementary urban education.

The model is designed to teach those readiness-for-learning skills which are essential if a child is to survive in school. The model assumes that there are a number of underlying readiness skills that children must have in order to learn to read and acquire other, higher order, cognitive skills:

- Attention
- Short-term memory
- Language acquisition
- Visual perception
- Auditory perception
- Kinesthetic process
- Elementary cognitive skills

Furthermore, the thesis of the model is that these readiness skills should be taught in parallel.

To this end, the director has established a parallel curriculum of instructional materials. All materials in the program are systematically organized around the following major decoding processes of the child:

- Gross motor
- Fine motor
- Kinesthetic
- Tactile
- Visual perception
- Auditory perception
- Auditory linguistic
- Language acquisition and reading
- Cognitive development

For each of these processes, the model specifies several basic skills objectives (some far better than others), criteria for student achievement of these skills, specific instructional materials to teach each skill, and a schedule for teaching and learning tasks.

Within this instructional framework, the model also specifies an organization of time and space in the school; roles for classroom and specialist teachers and paraprofessional aides; a process evaluation for checking on teacher adherence to roles and schedules; criterion performance tests for each of the decoding processes; individual student profiles for use by teachers; and a complete project evaluation by an outside evaluator.

In each school, the model is used with all students and teachers in kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade. The personnel include classroom teachers, full-time aides in each classroom, a number of full-time special language teachers, a few physical education teachers, and a reading specialist. The model uses the concept that the teachers become the messengers of the classroom environment, with much of the therapeutic learning process transferred from the teacher to the materials which have been designed to achieve prescribed therapeutic outcomes. Each member of the staff is responsible for giving instruction in specific skill areas, using the materials and techniques selected by the project director in the sequence and structure specified. For instance, physical education teachers work on gross motor skills in a component called movigenics; the classroom aides are responsible for the visual motor perception instruction; the specialists handle reading and language development; and the classroom teachers concentrate on reading and listening skill areas. The children in each grade except kindergarten are tested at the beginning of the year and placed in homogeneous groups of about eight each. In kindergarten, the teachers form the groups. In succeeding grades, grouping is based on results of the DISTAR tests. Children's assignments to specific groups change as progress warrants throughout the year. During the school day, kindergarten children are involved in project activities for 2 hours of their 3-hour school day and first graders are involved for a minimum of 2 1/2 hours of their 5-hour school day.

During this time each group moves from instructor to instructor at regular intervals. These intervals are fifteen minutes for kindergarten children and thirty minutes for first graders. During the rest of the time, each individual classroom teacher provides other instruction for her class of three project groups (about 24 students). They are encouraged but not required to use the project curriculum. Each child, then, has many teachers in a day, and most instructors rarely teach more than eight children at any one time.

The Project Director

The moving force in the project is the project director, a white man in his early fifties, trained in educational psychology. The project was his idea. Perhaps he alone totally understands it. Certainly he runs it. The components of the project may be described, analyzed, and disseminated. But we feel that the foremost reason behind any success this project enjoys is the idiosyncratic style of the director.

As Others See Him. Nearly everyone we talked with had both strongly positive and strongly negative opinions of him. One of his staff members said, "He rubs just about everybody the wrong way." He is a strong, forceful person who believes in his system. He certainly makes some people feel inadequate. Others react with hostility to his sometimes abrasive way of dealing with people. Teachers resent his rigid insistence that they do things his way. Almost all people who work with him or for him respect and support him in spite of these characteristics because of his obvious dedication, brilliance, hard work, and apparent success with the children.

One staff member captured the ambivalent reaction to him. On one hand, she said, "He's difficult sometimes; he has very definite ideas. He has to realize that everybody is not as energetic as he is and that not everybody is up on research. But I've learned to live with it." On the other hand, she said, "He's a dynamo. I'm giving him a hand. There are few people in the city who have tried to implement change as he has. We need people who are a thorn."

His Change Strategy. In the Right-To-Read project, the director played no role in the selection of the schools or the unit task forces in the schools. But once they were selected, he worked diligently to explain the model and enlist their support. He feels that without the active support of these groups, the success of the project would have been impossible. With their support, he believes that he can take substantial risks with the teachers and the central administration because teachers obey principals and the administration is sensitive to community pressure.

Within a school, the project director imposes his project on all teachers at a given grade level. He believes that to prove his model he must work with all teachers, not just volunteers. He starts with all kindergarten and first grade classes and adds a grade every year.

In the initial months of the program, he blitzes the teachers with all the components of the model. He tries to change the teachers' behavior, believing that behavioral change leads to attitudinal change. He goes into the classrooms personally, takes out the desks, and arranges the tables and screens the way he thinks best. He rigidly imposes the scheduled sequence of activities and student group changes. He insists that teachers follow his instructions completely. He says that the imposition of a totally new, complex system on teachers gives him time at the beginning because the teachers are confused, ask questions, but generally do not have the knowledge or energy to actively resist. He says it takes teachers three months to understand what he is asking them to do and feels he must show evidence of student progress in that time or he will face growing teacher opposition.

During those three months, the project director puts added emphasis on visual perception activities because he knows from experience that these produce changes in students quickly. His presence is dominating during those three months. He is always around, going from room to room, acting as a director, teacher, technician, counselor, helper. He says that because of his experience in setting up the model in numerous schools, he can now anticipate questions and problems and intuitively know how to handle various situations.

His general approach to teachers is based on his belief that teachers will not use additional time wisely unless it is structured for them; that they try to avoid additional work; are methods oriented, not systems oriented; do not set measurable objectives and thus rarely analyze data. He therefore uses a strategy that he calls "shape and shove" to obtain good performance from teachers. Whenever possible he tries to win teachers to his system by providing personal and tangible support, such as advice, demonstration, materials. But if necessary, he resorts to "shove" techniques to obtain behavior change, such as embarrassing teachers in front of their colleagues or directly confronting them. He strongly believes that some conflict is necessary for change to take place.

He is willing to take the risks of antagonizing teachers because he believes that teachers are basically obedient to the power structure, especially to the school principal. He also believes that teachers will support activity that leads to visible change in children, and he is confident that his model will do that. Finally, and fundamentally, he believes that teachers like the advantages his model gives them -- a full-time aide in the classroom and supportive specialists, who reduce the pupil-teacher ratio significantly and give the teacher more free time.

The project director believes that his methods are necessary to support sustained change in an urban school setting. He describes the problem in a final report on his project:

> It would appear that administrative attitudes and behaviors toward change at the school-based level are ambivalent at best. If change interferes too much with the pragmatic function of the principal or the teachers, a subtle resistance to the change process automatically occurs. This group phenomenon may be explained by some recent research that suggests that people may be "programmed" by our culture to behave in ways that cancel out their uniqueness and reduce their effectiveness in groups. People inculcated with such behavioral incompetence will tend to design organizations that protect their domains from change. Consequently, the internal attitudes of schools toward educational innovations will become defensive. This defensive posture can be either overt or covert and will create conditions of organizational entropy, whereby the school organization will tend to produce valid information for the unimportant problems and invalid information for the important issues. This type of attitudinal condition in the schools causes educational innovations to deteriorate, even if the data and political, economic, or social forces are in favor of change. This phenomenon of resistance is so subtle that it is difficult to combat or overcome and is the major cause of why there can be no "sustained change" in curriculum or product outcomes at the school-based level. Until administrators and teachers really want change to occur there can be no "sustained change" in our schools no matter how viable the change model might be.

This remains an unresolved educational administrative problem. It may be a major variable in why we have been unable to solve the educational failure rate of urban students. The project staff and its director have experienced, in depth, all the phenomena delineated in the educational change research literature. The fate of the project has followed pretty much the same course as has most other Office of Education-sponsored projects directed toward change at the school-based level. It is about to disappear, in spite of the fact that the data indicate that the program works much better for urban pupils than do more traditional educational models.

Until we are able to organize an "on-the-job" system of training for all classroom teachers that is based on a management-by-objectives approach for organizing the learning process, the skills development of students, and the use and application of the current research findings related to language and reading, change in any real form will be difficult to obtain and even more difficult to sustain. Let me hasten to point out, however, that the inability of the teacher to become a "change agent" is not the teacher's fault. The teacher is a product and victim of both current and past teacher training systems. These same teacher training systems, when linked with the current traditional educational models, result in a system which is self sustaining. The young teacher really is not trained or equipped to be a change agent by the present teacher training system, nor assisted in becoming a change agent in the "traditional educational model" used by urban schools. In fact, almost every variable in the present environment in our schools mediates against change. The teacher is responsible, in a sense, for maintaining this model, and any attempt by an outside agent (like the Informational Processing Model) to bring about change acts as a threat to the teacher, the administrators, and the ancillary personnel in the schools. Many teachers, however, rhetorically request change when they see how difficult it is to help most students. Even this body of teachers finds change difficult when the opportunity is presented to them. The reason for their difficulty, even when they seem motivated to change, is a crucial human factor--subtle resistance to both change and the need for a high level of energy output required to bring change about and to sustain change when it occurs. Changing teachers' habits is a most difficult process, as is most human change.

The analysis of the "change agent role" is stated here for teachers, because the "teacher is the key" to the entire change process, if we are to change the direction of failure in urban schools. However, it is almost an axiom that if principals and citywide higher administrative levels are not fully committed to the change process there can be no real change in the educational process at the school-based level. Therefore, any program that attempts to train teachers as agents of change has to have the leverage and the meaningful support of all administrators, or no meaningful sustained change can be accomplished, no matter how much government money we spend. Money is only part of the equation. We have analyzed and synthesized in the Informational Processing Model the basic needs of pupils and a system for obtaining and sustaining change at the classroom level, but what is most needed at this time is not only teacher education, but education of the upper levels of administration about the change process and its structure for problem-solving.

> Teachers are critical and they are at the cutting edge, but even if we could change teachers to be more effective problem-solvers, without the leverage that really supports change at the higher level of education, "sustained change" cannot occur.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Staffing

The Right-To-Read project is very expensive because of the number of staff involved. Besides the project director, there are three central project staff -- two psychologists and a reading specialist experienced in DISTAR. These four have been together for a number of years and administer both the Right-To-Read project and the Title III project (a total of five schools). The staff supervises the administration, scoring, and analyses of tests and helps teachers out.

In the project, each kindergarten and 1st grade classroom has a full-time aide. In the Madison School and Annex, the cost of the aides is shared by the Right-To-Read project and the Title I project. Most of the aides in these schools are parents with children in the schools. So they have many incentives to make the project work.

The most expensive personnel cost is for the specialists. The Right-To-Read project employs eight special language teachers, three movigenics (physical education) teachers, and one reading specialist. Besides instructing children, these specialists serve as in-school resources for the teachers.

The Right-To-Read Guidelines

The impact, transition, and redirection site relationship never materialized in the project. The impact site, Emerson School, was never included in the project and was not one of the more successful Title III project schools anyway. Any relationship among the schools was mediated through the person of the project director.

Also, as described earlier, the unit task forces conscientiously used the eleven-step planning process. The director described the process as cumbersome, the technical results as not very useful, but the process as extremely important in involving parents and winning their support.

He used the technical assistance team but did not find it useful. The technical assistance team disagreed with the philosophy, approach, and methods of the project. At one point, the situation became serious enough that the Right-To-Read project monitor met with the director and the technical assistance team to discuss whether the project should continue. In the end, the project monitor decided that Right-To-Read cannot dictate the approach a project must take and the project director won out.

Title III guidelines have been most useful to the project director. He especially has appreciated the accountability model and the assistance that the Title III project monitor gave him in implementing the model. Of course, the project director's thinking conforms to the structure of the accountability model. He also has made good use of the external evaluators that Title III requires. He established close relationships with them, learned from them, and altered his model because of their recommendations.

Teacher Training

The teachers did not have much pre-project teacher training. In the spring of 1972, all teachers received a one-day orientation by the director and three days of intensive DISTAR training. During the school year, the teachers received an additional two hours of formal training during the regularly scheduled one-half day per month released time for teachers. More informal training occurred through teacher contact with the project director, his staff, and some of the specialists in the school.

Problems at Washington School

Problems arose at Washington School that delayed its participation in the Right-To-Read program. The principal and the school administration disagreed with the chairperson of the local Title I Advisory Board over hiring aides for the project. The school system wished to transfer aides from other parts of the system, but the Title I coordinator wanted to hire local persons. This controversy prevented this school from beginning the project at the same time as Madison School. The project at Washington was scheduled to begin in early January, but a fire destroyed the school that month, and students and staff were distributed to other schools in the system. Some were transferred to the Madison School. This influx forced the city to find additional space for the students at Madison, and a building was leased that is now the Madison Annex. This school houses the second and third grades of Emerson School and is included in the Right-To-Read project.

Implementation at Madison School During the First Year

Madison was the only school in the Right-To-Read project during the first year because the project was only for kindergarten and 1st grade. Two hundred kindergarten children and 207 1st graders were involved the first year. Thus, although the project director and his staff were responsible for the four Title III project schools also, they were able to devote a great deal of time to Madison. This intensive effort enabled the project to get off to a good start. However, some resistance to the project soon emerged from two main sources.

Teacher Resistance. Many teachers believed that schedules were excessively rigid and instructional activities overly prescribed. They feared that teaching would become monotonous and children would suffer from lack of individualized attention. With this resistance, only the strong support of the principals allowed the model to be implemented as planned. The apparent success of the project for students has quieted this complaint; but for some, teaching has lost creative interest. As one teacher said on her questionnaire, "It's boring for me, but it works for the kids."

The project sought to change teacher behavior radically, particularly in kindergarten classrooms, which are generally play-oriented. The project model views kindergarten as a key year when children can be taught academic and school-oriented skills. At first, the kindergarten teachers resisted the pressure to eliminate trips, games, etc. Now most kindergarten teachers accept the project because they say their children have learned to read in kindergarten.

The project could not overcome all teacher resistance, however. The project director said he has had to work intensively with some teachers just to get them to adhere to the schedule or follow the instructional sequence. He has given up on a few and allowed them to move to the periphery of the project.

Resistance from School Specialists. Any project, such as the Adamston Right-To-Read project, that intends to implement a complete instructional system must compete with other interests for school time. Because this project demanded hours per day and teachers were required to teach other essential subjects such as math, the specialists in art, music, science, and black history found their subjects being squeezed out of the school day. These specialists and their supporters put enormous pressure on the project director, principals, and central school administration, and numerous meetings were held. But the principals have stood firmly with the project director and the special subjects have had to find time in the gaps in the schedule. The time available to them has been sharply reduced.

Changes in the Second Year

Pressures on the Project To Improve Reading Scores. The interim first year evaluation described a tension in this project. The evaluator pointed out that the project model is more than a reading project and that some project activities, while potentially leading to important goals, are only indirectly, if at all, related to improvement in reading. On the other hand, he emphasized that the central school administration and the school's parent community are justifiably concerned about "dramatic immediate results" in achieving gains in reading scores. If, as seems likely, improvement in reading scores is not dramatic in the short term, he states that the project would face pressure to address the reading problem more directly even if most of its other goals were achieved.

In fact, the project director has perceived this pressure. He realizes that the chances of his project becoming institutionalized in Adamston depends on the demonstration of strong and continued growth in reading. He understands the parents' concern about reading and their view that parts of his model are frills. He has heard the constant suggestion that the movigenics component may be dispensable. But he disagrees, believing that movigenics is an integral part of the model. He is alarmed by the narrow focus on reading achievement test scores and by what he views as a simple-minded search for an easy panacea. Yet he has already changed his model.

The fundamental assumption of the project is that the basic skills training will eventually lead to gains in higher order cognitive skills such as reading comprehension. But, it will take time for these gains to show up, and the project may not have this period of support.

The High Intensity Learning System. Bowing to pragmatic concerns, the project director eliminated movigenics in the second grade component which began in the second year of the project. In its place, he added a special reading program, the High Intensity Learning System (HILS). Students go to a specially equipped reading center in groups of thirty for forty-five minutes each day. The HILS program does the following:

- Defines each pupil's unique reading needs.
- Prescribes appropriate reading activities.
- Enables one teacher to manage the individual curriculum of 30 or more students per class hour (150 students per day).
- Combines the best individualized reading materials from 40 publishers within a comprehensive classroom management system that

is based on the philosophy that if children cannot read it's because they have not been taught to read.

- Provides educational assessment for each child.
- Develops profiles for each learner.
- Evaluates design for accountability.
- Evaluates entire program by an independent evaluator.

Second graders also participate in the other components of the Informational Processing Model. So the time they spend on project activities increases to 3 to 4 hours a day.

PROJECT IMPACT

A visitor is impressed by the obvious behavior change that is apparent in staff and children. The staff is working with small groups of students in every available physical space. The physical education instructor has five children in the auditorium. The language specialist is working with six children in a small office. An aide is working on visual motor perception with eight children on one side of a classroom. Behind a screen in a corner of the same classroom the teacher is running a DISTAR lesson with five children. When the schedule calls for a shift, the children go single file by themselves to their next class.

Teachers and principals, in questionnaires and interviews, indicate that the children are more orderly, are more interested in school, and are reading better. The principals enthusiastically praise the project. Most teachers reluctantly give the project credit for the positive changes that they see in the children.

The interim evaluation shows that in general teachers are implementing the project as intended. Most teachers adhere to the schedule, teach the assigned activities, and keep the proper records. Only three classrooms were consistently off schedule. The leadership and persistence of the director is a factor in successful implementation. So is the perceived success with students. Another critical factor appears to be the regularly scheduled shifts of students from one staff to another that make each staff member somewhat dependent on the others. When the basic structure of instruction is changed away from the self-contained classroom, it is hard for a staff member just to ignore the project directives. A final factor in teacher compliance is the presence of aides and specialists. With these extra personnel, teachers teach fewer children at any one time and many, especially 2nd grade teachers, have more noninstructional time during the day. However, instruction is compartmentalized, and many staff members do not know what the children do when they are with other staff. For instance, some teachers asked us what was happening in the project. Others said they included some extra material in the students' schedule because they feared it was being left out, only to discover later that it was being done elsewhere. Staff members in the HILS center commented that very few classroom teachers have visited the center and almost none use the data they provide on each student. It seems that the project director (and perhaps his staff) has the only overall view of the project, although the project director says that this situation had changed by the end of the school year.

The final first year evaluation indicates more than average monthly gains for children on all the designated criterion tests (six for 1st graders and seven for kindergarten children) except on the test for following instructions. The most dramatic gains were on the Lorge Thorndike Intelligence Test and the visual perception tests; the smallest gains (only slightly above the average monthly gains) were on the three Metropolitan Achievement Tests (word knowledge, word discrimination, and reading).

The evaluation concludes with the following observations:

> The data suggest the simplistic but crucial fact that children tend to learn what we teach them. The problem facing Adamston's Right-To-Read project is what to teach in kindergarten that directly pays off in literacy. Right now it appears that the curriculum is pretty strong except for following directions, and that will require modifying teachers' behavior to get them to relinquish the mother hen roles with K-1 children. These are well-intentioned teachers who could smother these children into underachievement with their well-intentioned mothering.
>
> Considering the gains, the Right-To-Read treatment should become the basic K-1 curriculum throughout the school district. In implementing the curriculum, it should be carefully supervised and should be given three years to take hold in the schools.
>
> The project is dramatically successful, enough to warrant media coverage. Adamston's children need some good publicity, and this project deserves some positive notoriety.

CONTINUATION AND DISSEMINATION

Despite the flood of federal money that has entered Adamston, high officials in the central school administration claim that they currently would not budget money to continue the program. In fact, administrators say, if the project does not gain third year Right-To-Read money, the project will end, because all available city money has already been budgeted for 1974-75. These school officials say that the project is very expensive and has not proved itself superior to other reading programs in raising the all-important reading achievement scores. If federal money does not phase out until next year, school officials say they will have to seriously consider institutionalizing and spreading the project if the test scores show impressive gains. This is a difficult challenge. First, many researchers believe that reading achievement tests, such as the MAT used in Adamston, are biased not to reflect reading gains due to any specific curriculum. Second, the evaluation of the project indicates that much of the project activities are aimed at improving reading scores. Finally, to be available for school administration decisionmaking for the 1975-76 school year, the test scores must be available by the middle of the 1974-75 school year. Thus school officials will have to rely on second year results available in June 1974. These results will reflect only one and a half years of instruction. The project isn't likely to achieve great gains in reading achievement scores under these constraints.

One reason that the project must achieve great success is that the project director is white in an increasingly black Adamston. Most people we talked with at least reluctantly agreed, and some emphatically stated, that race makes a difference in Adamston. All but one of the top-level school officials are black. The project's strongest top-level supporter, a white assistant superintendent, is retiring. Active middle-level support is slight.

The project will also have difficulty spreading because the assistant superintendent for elementary and secondary education has produced his own system-wide reading program. It does nothing more than sanction three programs for more widespread use--DISTAR, Cureton, and Lippincott. Supposedly, each of the three approaches plus additional school-initiated reading programs will be systematically compared. However, the research design appears meager and there is evidence that the selection of the models and the schools to use them was based more on political considerations than the merit of the reading programs.

Finally, the Right-To-Read project will have difficulty spreading because some key officials don't like the project director. Everyone we talked with conceded that he antagonizes people, thus making it easier for them to oppose the project.

The director himself is pessimistic about the future of the project. When this subject is broached, his usual confident, feisty manner turns to somber uncertainty. He says the project has proved itself over the last five years and he blames social and political turmoil and bureaucratic inertia for its continued pilot status. In his most optimistic moments, he believes that the staff must try to continue the project on an even keel until the political context becomes more favorable.

The project has been running in four other Adamston schools for some time without direct federal support. The assistant superintendent for elementary education provided these schools with extra resources for the specialist teachers and aides from Title I and local funds so that the project could continue in these schools. In three of the schools, the project is continuing at almost full implementation, but in the fourth, the project is deteriorating. The principal in this school is opposed to the project, and the three schools that are continuing have found that it is necessary to continue with the process checks on teacher behavior in order to keep the project at full implementation. Otherwise, there is gradual slippage back into old behavior.

MIDDLETON

Todd I. Endo

Middleton is an old northeastern seaport city with many diversified industries. It has its share of inner-city problems, the most serious of which is racial strife in the schools.

The Right-To-Read project in Middleton has just completed its second year. It involves three new open-space schools--Ventone (1000 students) opened in 1971; Horton (700 students) opened in 1972; Bethel (600 students) opened in 1972. About 90 percent of the $100,000-per-year project budget goes for summer teacher workshops, and the rest for some consultant help and workshops for teachers during the school year, supplies, equipment, and periodic visits to the schools by the project director.

The Right-To-Read project is hard to define for many reasons. First, by Right-To-Read policy, Middleton and other large cities were virtually promised grants without much stipulation on project content. Second, Middleton used the Right-To-Read money, in combination with Title III and city money to facilitate the smoother opening of a number of new open-space schools. Third, two of the three Right-To-Read schools also have a number of other projects going at the same time (e.g., Title I and assistance from local universities). For all these reasons, Middleton essentially pooled the Right-To-Read money with funds from other sources and used the funds to achieve a number of its own goals, not restricted to reading. The project certainly cannot be considered an exemplary reading project, but it is a good example of how a city school system uses unrestricted federal funds for its own purposes.

LEA CHARACTERISTICS

Any reading project in the Middleton public school system in 1974 had to contend with a number of factors which influenced its direction and progress.

Desegregation

For nearly a decade Middleton public schools have been in conflict with the state, HEW, and the courts over racial imbalance in the schools. When we were in Middleton, the state legislature was arguing over the governor's desegregation plan, and a federal court was considering a suit to desegregate the schools. Throughout the year, some school staffs therefore lived in uncertainty. The Horton School was most affected. Three different plans have been proposed for the school. The first would have made the school a middle school; the second would have brought in a large number of upper middle-class whites. The current proposal will squeeze the existing school into the lower levels of the building and make the upper level a middle school annex. Each plan would have different effects on the staff. Under the current plan, a number of the younger staff will be forced to transfer. The Ventone School was affected only a little, and the all-white Bethel School is excluded from any desegregation plan.

Personal Politics

It has been noted that politics in the Middleton public schools and other political units in the state are personal rather than issue-oriented. While this tendency may be true in most places, it seems extreme in Middleton. One person there compared the system with a feudal order based on loyalty. At the top of the order is the school board, which dominates the entire system. The superintendent is relatively powerless to act independently of the board. According to many, school administrators' fortunes rise or fall depending on their ties to members of the board.

Fragmentation in the School System

Perhaps because of personal politics, it is not easy to explain the divisions of responsibility in the system. Reading, for instance, is under the associate superintendent for special services, not under the associate superintendent for instructional services. A new department of reading was created, perhaps in response to a survey of reading that showed very low achievement scores. But the reading department has no budget and no apparent power. The director of reading, at present at least, has no influence over reading projects in the schools. In fact, it seems that each school is rather autonomous, especially when, as in the case of one Right-To-Read school, it has a strong principal.

INITIATION OF THE PROJECT

Background in the District

The city of Middleton, independent of the school board, began to build a number of open-space elementary schools in the early 1970s. The first two, Ventone and Wister, opened in the fall of 1971. The city stocked the schools with an abundance of materials and turned them over to the board to administer. The board was, despite itself, forced to plan for the transition of staff and students from the older, smaller, traditionally built schools. The city contributed some money for summer orientation workshops. The board also obtained a state Title III grant, which supported three members of the staff development department to work full-time with the open-space schools. This staff worked with the Ventone and Wister schools in 1971-72, added six schools in 1972-73, and one more in 1973-74. While they were dealing with problems that might arise from the new open-space schools, Right-To-Read made money available for a reading project in the fall of 1971.

Right-To-Read Policy

The Right-To-Read project selection process for the big city schools was simple. Right-To-Read notified 21 city school systems that they had been awarded a $100,000 grant in November 1971, and in January 1972 awarded $10,000 planning grants to each system. In the next few months the school systems wrote up operating plans and were then awarded the remaining $90,000. The Right-To-Read project monitor for the city believes that this was a mistake for Middleton and the other cities, because any real leverage OE possessed was lost when Right-To-Read eliminated the selection process. As a consequence, the project monitor feels that Middleton Right-To-Read has never been a reading project; it is primarily a means of bolstering open-space schools.

The Response of Middleton

An associate superintendent is credited with writing the initial Right-To-Read proposal. According to him, the Ventone School had been working out reasonably well for a year, and the district wanted to copy it elsewhere. Horton and Bethel schools were chosen because their new open-space facilities were scheduled to open in the fall of 1972.

The plan submitted in May 1972 was quite brief and stated clearly that the grant would be used to pay for staff development activities that would facilitate "the transition from a self-contained classroom to team teaching open-space schools." Staff development plans included general approaches to open-space schools (team teaching and individualization), as well as specific reading approaches.

The objectives listed in the proposal are largely modifications of objectives suggested by Right-To-Read in its planning kit.

The "exemplary programmatic components" of the impact school, Ventone, which were to be replicated, were described in vague terms:

1. Use of consultative support to the staff in addressing instructional problems.
2. Providing eight commercial reading programs as well as a variety of teacher-developed materials that could be matched to pupil learning styles.
3. Use of formal and informal diagnostic-prescriptive approaches.
4. Use of neighborhood teacher-aides as members of the instructional team.
5. Support of summer institutes and regular in-service workshops for staff members.
6. Use of various innovative instructional techniques, including team teaching, multi-age groupings, and the employment of a "contract" system for selected students.

Staff development activities were described in equally vague terms:

> Since the impact school will now be the model for the Right-To-Read program, it will serve as a workshop base for the two schools. Most of the pre-service training will take place in the Ventone School. Training will be provided for the following:
>
> 1. Teachers assigned to the redirection and transition schools.
>   (a) Three-day internship during the month of May--10 teachers.
>   (b) Five two-hour workshops in the month of May--35 teachers.
>   (c) Four-week summer workshop five hours a day--54 teachers.
> 2. Teachers in the Ventone School will attend a two-week workshop, 5 hours a day, to develop learning packets to share with the two other schools.

3. Tutor aides assigned to the redirection and transition schools:
    - (a) Two-week summer workshop for four hours a day.
    - (b) Projected in-service workshops for the academic year 1972-73--20.
4. Youth corps tutors--no cost to project (A. B. C. D.).
    - (a) Summer workshop.
    - (b) Internship at the Ventone School in September and October.
    - (c) Tutoring program during 1972-73 in all three Right-To-Read schools.
5. Unit task force parents will be invited to join in workshops for teachers in May.
6. Volunteer parents will attend
    - (a) Training program for community tutors.
    - (b) Will volunteer to tutor during academic year 1972-73.

During these workshops the experiences, use of materials, and the evaluation of student performance will be shared to prepare the participants for their involvement in the Right-To-Read program.

Ninety percent of the budgeted funds were to be used to pay salaries for staff development. The budget specified how many people would be involved, and for how long, in each activity.

This plan was accepted by Right-To-Read. The project monitor says that the plan is typical for Middleton, that Middleton officials are action-oriented and never take time to develop comprehensive plans.

In effect, Middleton officials opportunistically seized available federal dollars to work on a pressing local problem that was only tangentially related to Right-To-Read's purpose.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Project Director

Ms. Janet Brown was selected to direct the project soon after the initial operating plan was submitted. She had many years of experience as a Middleton elementary school teacher, had worked in a laboratory open-space school, and most recently had been a member of a staff development team funded by Title III to work with new open-space schools. She continued to be a member of the Title III team during her Right-To-Read tenure.

Ms. Brown is the moving force in the program. The unit task forces may have functioned effectively in the beginning, but there is little evidence now that they have had much influence. Ms. Brown says they have vetoed a few ideas but admits that in 1973-74 she consulted each member individually. She claims that the principals are the educational leaders in their schools and that she is primarily an administrator. But the principals at two of the schools (Horton and Bethel) say they leave it all to Ms. Brown. These principals could not describe the program, needs assessment, or the unit task force in anything but the vaguest generalities.

Ms. Brown, then, appears to have made most of the decisions in the program within the framework developed by an associate superintendent. The latter opposed adding personnel (e.g., aides) to project staffs and chose to rely on changing teacher roles and attitudes toward staff development. Ms. Brown decided to use the bulk of the money for summer workshops for staff. She arranged for most of the specific "extras" in the project, such as a toy workshop for parents and high school age tutors in the schools. She also has designed the second and third summer workshops and the workshops, seminars, and conferences during the school year. She actively seeks suggestions from the staff at each school.

Except for a secretary, she is the only central staff person on the project, and her salary continues to be paid by the Title III grant. Thus, in this project almost all monies do reach the schools involved, mostly for staff salaries.

Characteristics of the Schools

All schools were new and modern, on the open-space plan. Each school was divided into a number of "pods," each containing from five to seven teachers and from 100 to 180 students. All schools, except Ventone, where 180 students were assigned to pods designed for 120 to 150, had enough space for open-plan activities.

The race and class composition of each of the schools was different. Ventone, located in a lower middle class area that was becoming increasingly black, was about equally split between black and white students. Horton School adjoins a large housing project and enrolls predominantly poor blacks and Spanish-speaking students. Bethel School is virtually 100 percent white, lower middle class Irish.

The principal of Ventone is a dynamic and controversial woman. She was familiar with the Right-To-Read program and her school in general and certainly fought to get resources for her school. This aggressiveness has led to a few conflicts with Ms. Brown. At the other extreme, the principal at Bethel School was an older man who appeared to be largely a plant manager. Apparently he had a laissez-faire attitude toward instruction. He said he thought Bethel was chosen for

Right-To-Read because it did not have any other federally funded program. The principal at Horton School also did not seem to involve himself much in school instruction, but, from comments from teachers, he apparently was very concerned with discipline and order. In none of the schools, with the possible exception of Ventone, could the principals be called educational leaders. One reason for this is that each principal is responsible for four elementary schools in the district.

The teaching staff was predominantly young and white. Teachers said they could do pretty much what they wanted in their pods. As a result, the atmospheres of the pods depend on the particular staff, and each pod is in many ways a semi-independent sub-school. Most teachers from the old schools transferred voluntarily to the new open-space schools. There has been only modest turnover since then.

Relationship to the Title III Project and Others

We found that most project teachers had difficulty saying what Right-To-Read was. One thanked it for providing a wealth of materials that the city had in fact paid for. Others knew about the Right-To-Read summer workshops but not much else. The Right-To-Read project is so interwoven with other projects in the school that the average teacher would have no way of distinguishing one from another.

For example, the OE project monitor for Right-To-Read feels that the project is impossible to distinguish from the Title III project--that they complement each other. As mentioned previously, the Title III staff preceded the Right-To-Read effort in the Ventone School and works in each of the three Right-To-Read schools with the same general purpose. In addition, Ms. Brown is on the staffs of both projects, so when she goes to a school she wears two hats.

Another example of how the two projects interweave is the funding of resource pool teachers in each school. In 1972-73, the principal of Ventone felt that the Title III staff development team was not spending enough time in her school. She suggested that a full-time substitute be provided to free five teachers one day a week to work with other teachers. She claimed that Right-To-Read could not fund this. Eventually Title III did, with the stipulation that Ventone teachers also provide assistance to other open-space schools (this is the role of Right-To-Read's impact site). In 1973-74, Middleton funded the resource pool teacher project in eight open-space schools for fifty days during the year. Right-To-Read then paid for some additional days in the Ventone School.

The Right-To-Read schools also have other projects whose activities sometimes overlap with Right-To-Read or meet needs in the school that Right-To-Read might have fulfilled. For instance, Horton School has a large Title I program that focuses on reading; an arrangement with a nearby university that provides student teachers, tutors, and other resources to the school; and a bilingual education program. Ventone has perhaps even more resources to work with. A staff person from the state university works virtually full-time in the school. He formerly worked with the Title III team and is concerned with the effective implementation of the open-school idea. He arranges for in-service courses for university credit on a variety of subjects (administration in open-space schools, use of physical space, individualizing reading) and serves as a general resource to teachers. The school also has a pilot Sesame Street math course, a bilingual education program, an extensive science program using the regional science center in the school, a pilot program for special education students under the new PL-766 which requires some melding of special education students into regular school activities, and a small social worker program in conjunction with a local medical center. Bethel School has no other major program using outside funds.

Many of these activities are focused directly on making open-space schools work. In part, then, it seems that the Right-To-Read project in Middleton fills a void in the summer with a workshop and works around the edges of other projects during the school year. Therefore, it is impossible to assess the effect of the Right-To-Read project alone.

Project Activities

For the teachers, the workshops in the first year occurred as outlined in the operating plan. Teachers from Bethel and Horton Schools did visit Ventone School for a series of orientation sessions, and some of them worked intensively at the school for three days. The focus of these meetings was on open-space schools, not reading. In the summer, almost the entire faculties of Bethel and Horton and some parents attended a four-week workshop that included a number of lectures and sessions on a variety of topics, but only one week on reading. The workshop was run by outside consultants and some Ventone teachers. In addition to this workshop, Ventone teachers spent two weeks developing individualized "learning packets" for students, primarily in reading.

In the second year the staffs worked independently.

The plan for the third-year workshops was again to run a joint workshop for all three staffs and structure it around specific topics. The teachers we talked with opposed this plan. Ms. Brown did not give a reason besides a tight budget for the change in structure.

Project Strategy. The Right-To-Read project obviously did not have any specific strategy to improve instruction in open-space schools. It provided a smorgasbord of speakers and activities and operated on the theory that opportunities for experienced teachers (Ventone staff) to share insights with other teachers and time for teachers in each school to work independently would help. No specific approach to diagnostic-prescriptive reading instruction or any specific reading program was pushed. No systematic follow-up during the school year was attempted except for Ms. Brown's weekly visits to each school. Some teachers saw her regularly and appreciated her help. Others scarcely knew who she was.

She justified the project strategy by stating that reading can only be taught effectively if a teacher is functioning effectively at a more general level. For instance, if a teacher is "uptight" about racial imbalance or fears open-space, Ms. Brown feels the teacher won't function well. Therefore she prefers to deal with the larger staff development issues in summer workshops and in personal conferences during the school year and not restrict activities solely to reading. She believes that teachers know how to teach reading and do not need more reading instruction. She says that teachers need support that will enable them to believe that they and the children will succeed. Because of her background as a teacher in an open-space situation she says she is sensitive to teachers' problems and can provide some of this necessary support. But she has not further specified what a supportive system is.

We asked Ms. Brown why most of the money went for the summer workshops, but her answer wasn't satisfactory. For the first year, before the opening of Horton and Bethel Schools, a summer workshop made a good deal of sense. After that she apparently did not seek any alternatives. Ms. Brown hinted at one reason for summer workshops--teachers who attend them receive $10 per hour, and for many the workshops take the place of a summer job. Ms. Brown said that "everyone who worked in a school all year deserves a workshop." She also hinted that when there were more teachers than slots available, principals chose to reward some teachers. She said that in one school the principal refused to allow new teachers, who needed orientation, to attend the workshop because they would have to replace some teachers who had taught in the school the previous year.

Influence of the Right-To-Read Process. The Right-To-Read process has not had much influence on this project. Ms. Brown, as project director, has dominated. The principals and unit task forces have had little influence on the project. Only the principal of Ventone School has been a forceful leader, and this has nothing to do with the Right-To-Read process. If a needs assessment was conducted, it has had little influence on project activities. No one seemed to be aware of one. Designations of impact, transition, and redirection sites have had little meaning. The Ventone staff has provided some assistance to other staffs, but essentially the schools have operated independently. Ms. Brown has used the technical assistance team little since the first year of the project. She felt it was generally out of touch with the needs of the staffs.

IMPACT ON THE SCHOOLS

As mentioned previously, the specific impact of the Right-To-Read project on the three schools cannot be assessed. We can, however, offer a few observations on where the schools are now and how the staff perceives the process it has gone through. In all schools, normal activities seem to continue, with few signs of major problems. As we toured the schools and talked with staff it was apparent that the schools differed from one another in their acceptance of open-space; the pods in each school showed considerable variation.

Ventone

Ventone best accepts open-space now, although the staff says it has taken three years. Because of the principal's directive, all pods include students from all grades, 1 to 5. But most pods are organized in age groupings within the pod. The idea of the resource-pool teachers began here and seems to have had the most effect here. The five-person staff has trained teachers how to use the new materials that were made available at the opening of the school and has concentrated on instructing teachers on the Fountain Valley reading system, which the principal hopes to implement schoolwide. The staff has used the open-space well and has begun to construct equipment for it. We get the feeling that of all the schools this staff is the most alive, but little feeling that this relates in any way to the Right-To-Read project.

Horton School

Neither the principal nor the assistant principal is an enthusiast of open-space schools. They cope as best they can. The staff is generally young and competent. According to staff persons, team teaching has worked well in three of the pods and much less well in the others. Relationships among the pod members were cited as the critical factor. As in the other schools, the staff appreciated the Right-To-Read workshops in general but could attribute no specific contribution to them. We feel any good results in the school stem from efforts of individual teachers. They do not sense much leadership from the administration. As one teacher said, "Once the doors are closed, you could hang the kids by their thumbs--as long as they kept quiet."

Bethel School

By the principal's admission, Bethel is a very structured school. Again, behavior in the pods varied. But only Bethel had the extreme of a teacher who organized her students in rows in one corner of the pod, just as she did in her self-contained classroom. As in the other schools, we sensed that the Right-To-Read project had only a marginal effect.

IMPACT ON THE DISTRICT

The project appears to be having little impact on the district. Few teachers or principals in the non-Right-To-Read schools we visited knew anything about the project. Directors of the Baker project, a Title III project also working in Middleton, said that they have been trying unsuccessfully to find out about the Right-To-Read project for a couple of years. The director of the reading department does not know much about the project. Since she is in her first year, she is naturally concerned about other problems, but she does not appear to be looking at the project for help in formulating a systemwide reading strategy.

When the project ends, nothing tangible will remain, with the possible exception of the resource pool teachers, who were funded primarily from Title III. All else will remain only in the experience of the staffs.

In general, it appears that the Right-To-Read money served the useful purpose of helping the system open a series of open-space schools. It was never expected to do much more.

CONCLUSIONS

Importance of Project Selection

We agree with the project monitor who feels that Right-To-Read's selection policy of "no selection" is inadequate unless the program is intended to give general aid. The Middleton Right-To-Read project paid lip service to the Right-To-Read strategy and then did whatever it wanted. We also agree that the project monitor had no real choice but to play the game within Middleton's framework once Middleton was selected. Had he chosen to try to enforce Right-To-Read's priorities and structure, he would have failed, because OE has no power to control local district implementation. This project was not intended to change reading practices and succeeded masterfully. It was intended to ease the transition to open-space schools and probably helped in that process.

Change in the Middleton Schools

The discussion of the Baker project shows that good ideas are powerless if the project staff cannot establish a working relationship with the school staffs. Our discussion of Middleton's Right-To-Read project shows that the establishment of good working relationships is meaningless in the absence of good ideas. Ms. Brown got along with almost everbody in power and knew the incentives (such as summer workshops) for teachers. As an experienced teacher who had risen to an administrative position, she was a member of the "club." But as a socialized member of the club she expressed few challenging ideas and certainly did not create many waves.

ROCKTON

John G. Wirt

THE CITY AND THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Rockton, a midwestern city in a predominantly agricultural state, is a major manufacturing center for machinery and other industrial products. The city is old, but unlike many other large central cities appears trim and prosperous. The population is highly ethnic, consisting largely of German, Polish, black, and Chicano groups.

The Rockton school district is large, both in geographic area and numbers of schools. The school board is elected, active, and appears to play a strong role in setting policies for the schools--even to the extent of deciding on school-by-school allocations of some district funds.

The people we interviewed all expressed strong support for the superintendent, who was planning to leave the district for another position at the end of the 1973-74 school year. He made a number of changes in the school district during the seven years of his tenure. He reorganized the school district to improve communications among principals by grouping the schools into clusters. Each cluster has two types of schools: "A" schools, which are inner-city schools, and "B" schools, which are fringe schools. Principals meet regularly with other principals in their cluster and with principals in another cluster in the same category of school. The principals in each cluster report to an administrative specialist, who reports to an area superintendent, who reports to the assistant superintendent for administration.

The superintendent has attempted to change the role of principals in the school district by converting to school-based budgeting and providing more assistant principals and instructional specialist staff from the central office to assist the principals in improving their schools. Principals are being encouraged to think of themselves as educational managers or facilitators, as well as instructional leaders. Assistant principals have been assigned responsibilities for disciplinary tasks, and specialist staff instructional leadership. The promotion policy for principals has also been changed from strict seniority to "the-man-for-the job," as one principal put it. Since the announcement of this new policy, promotions have moved younger staff ahead of older staff into principal positions. Principals are paid according to the "complexity" of their school, and as a result, five elementary school principals are paid more than one high school principal.

INNOVATIVE PROCESS IN THE DISTRICT

The superintendent has also moved to support more innovation in the schools through a district-funded improvement program that implements his "broken-front" strategy for educational change whereby individual schools are provided extra resources for innovations of their own choosing. In operation, the program resembles a mini-version of Title III. Any school can apply to the board for a project grant to make any change it wants. A school writes a proposal, which is then evaluated by the district staff and presented to the board for a funding decision. As in Title III, some schools get help from the central office in writing their proposals.

The program also resembles Title III in the problems that arise: There are many more applications for projects than there are funds for projects; many schools that need change the most do not apply; many projects are of low quality; and once a project is funded it is almost impossible to turn it off. The district is currently struggling to find ways to terminate projects without disruption. It is thinking of limiting funding to one or two years, with the provision that a school may apply for a "locational budget" (which means permanent board funding) if its project is "successful." These problems of too many proposals and limited funds to continue projects appear to be even more severe at the local level than at the federal level because of the closer political relationship between the decision-makers and the funding recipients. The schools are not at all bashful about stirring up community support to storm board meetings to get, or keep, funding for a project.

Federal Project Management

The district has a "categorical program coordinator," who is the equivalent of a federal program manager. The coordinator, who reports directly to the deputy superintendent, has no staff; he keeps track of funding availability through a network of informal communications that he has established, and he initiates proposal activities when a potential source of funds is located.

Rockton does not have a proposal writing staff but calls on curriculum supervisors or other district office staff to set aside their normal duties and take responsibility for proposal writing and coordination. All proposals for federal projects must go to the board for final approval. Once awarded, federal projects are typically managed by someone in the district office and usually someone who was involved in writing the proposal.

The federal program coordinator prefers state-managed to federally managed programs for two reasons: The technical support from the state level is higher in quality, and is more frequent. He argues that federal project officers tend to be young and inexperienced compared with their state counterparts, and can come to Rockton far less frequently.

Effects of Change Agent Programs on the District

The federal program coordinator indicated that the principal effect of federal categorical programs is to force school districts to add additional staff that would not normally be hired, which, in his terms "eventually encumbers the school district with extra costs after federal funds are terminated." Judging from the Right-To-Read project that we visited, however the school district seems to be able to shift staff from one source of funding to another so that, in reality, the number of extra staff forced on Rockton goes up only as the level of federal funds it receives goes up.

Funding Reading in the Rockton Schools

Rockton spends a lot of money on reading. About 230 reading teachers and 7 reading instructional specialists (supervisory staff) are in the school system, mostly at elementary levels, which means that on the average there are almost two reading teachers per elementary school.

Funding for reading teachers comes from three primary sources: regular board funds, Program Improvement Proposal funds, and Title I. Title I supports 67 reading teachers, Program Improvement Proposals fund about 20 reading teachers, and the board funds about 144. In comparison, Right-To-Read funds have been used to support 4.4 reading teachers.

Reading Centers Program

An important part of the reading effort in Rockton is the reading centers program, begun in 1948 by the present Right-To-Read project director. This program has often been cited by the Office of Education as a model reading program, and in 1971 it was cited by the National Center for Educational Communications.

The reading centers program consists of a central office administrative facility plus satellite reading centers in the schools. A reading center typically consists of one or two reading teachers (depending on the number of students receiving specialized reading instruction) who are provided with a classroom and great quantities of reading materials. Children with reading problems are brought to the reading centers daily for half-hour sessions with a reading center teacher.

Originally, the reading center program was strictly for instruction of students in the 4th grade and above, but over the last decade the program has gradually changed. One trend has been a gradual shift away from emphasis on the upper elementary grades toward an emphasis on the primary grades on the grounds that it is better to prevent reading problems than to try curing them after they have become severe. Another trend has been away from having the reading center teacher work with children in a separate room, and toward having the reading center teacher help other teachers improve their skills in teaching reading.

Those we talked with in Rockton suggested two somewhat contradictory reasons for this shift. First, the need for remedial reading teachers began to increase greatly as the student population became increasingly black and poor, and as teachers recognized the convenience of having slow readers removed from the classroom. Second, there was growing concern about the bad side effects on children when removed from their regular classrooms for specialized instruction.

Title I Funded Centers. Many of the district's reading centers are supported with Title I funds. Forty percent of the district's total of $5 million in Title I funds is allocated to the reading center program. Title I funds can be spent only on Title I-eligible children, and thereby conflict with the district's desire to convert reading center teachers into reading resource teachers (reading teachers who work directly with the classroom teacher). The district has handled this problem by adding district-funded reading teachers to the Title I centers as the reading center teachers are converted into reading resource teachers. In 1973-74, the district policy was to allow Title I center teachers to spend half their time in remedial instruction with Title I children, and the other half working as reading resource teachers. In 1974-75, the split is projected to be 60/40.

The district obtains its reading resource teachers mainly through promoting personnel from within the system who have obtained the certification required by the school district.

Board-Funded Reading Teachers. It is estimated that the board-funded reading teachers work approximately one-half time as resource teachers and the rest of the time in the remedial mode with children. The district obtains these estimates through informal feedback during visits to the schools and monthly reports filed by the reading teachers.

Continuum Program. Rockton is also implementing the Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development in all elementary schools. This program, if implemented, would adopt the major goal of Right-To-Read--diagnostic/prescriptive reading instruction--in all elementary schools. The program is the result of several years of study by subcommittees of the board, which decided last year to make reading a top priority, to adopt the Wisconsin Design, and to provide $500,000 for implementation. The money will be spent for seven reading instructional specialists (RIS) who will operate out of the district office, for one hundred aides to help teachers with clerical work, and for materials.

Priority of Reading in the District. While the board has designated reading as a top priority in the district, no one has been assigned clear responsibility for reading in the district and implementation of the continuum program. A large number of persons in the central office have various duties and functions concerning reading and implementing the continuum program. In addition, the district has also designated as top priorities new services for exceptional or special education students, bilingual education, career education, environmental education, and programs for native Americans.

John Jones, reading coordinator in the division of elementary and secondary education, is the Right-To-Read project director and has been assigned the seven RIS personnel. He reports to the division director, Fred Gross. Also reporting to Gross are four elementary curriculum specialists (supported by 20 supervisory teachers) and 30 secondary curriculum specialists and supervisory teachers. The curriculum specialists are responsible for working on their subjects with all schools in the district, but they also serve as "team leaders" for one or more clusters of schools. Many of the curriculum specialists are concerned in one way or another with reading in their subject areas. In their team leader roles, the curriculum supervisors are concerned with all curriculum matters in their clusters and work with the principals and administrative specialists in the clusters. Because the administrative specialists are paid more than the curriculum specialists, and because the principals report to the administrative specialists, the curriculum supervisors are in a complex situation regarding their responsibilities for curriculum and need for access to the schools. This organizational arrangement has created problems for Jones in defining responsibilities for the seven RIS personnel assigned to him for implementing the continuum program. After several meetings with the curriculum supervisory staff over a job description for the seven RIS personnel, in which little progress was made, Gross has apparently dropped the whole matter, and told everyone to get on with their work and forget the job description business. The job of coordinating efforts of the RIS personnel in implementing the continuum program has been assigned to an acting reading consultant.

RIGHT-TO-READ

In this complex organizational situation, with Jones not having clear responsibility for reading, and in the context of the large reading effort in Rockton, the comparatively small Right-To-Read project has not yet had a large impact on the district. The main results have been to add 4.4 reading teachers to the four Rockton schools involved, to produce minor changes in the reading curricula of three of these schools, and to support continued implementation of the Wisconsin Design in the fourth.

Project Organization

Although the project director is Jones, most of the administrative load was carried by his assistant, Bob Trail, a former reading teacher who was selected for his capabilities as a reading specialist and resource teacher. Trail has mostly handled paper work, although he did plan most of the in-service sessions in the project's first year and was involved in the change of a reading teacher in one school in the second year. Jones' main contribution was dealing with the federal project officer from Right-To-Read in Washington. Neither Jones nor Trail exercised much direct leadership, but Right-To-Read does not want leadership from the project director. The intervention strategy is that the leadership should be provided by the principals in their individual schools.

The four Right-To-Read schools were Drew, Spears, Martin, and Brewster. Each school decided to use Right-To-Read money to hire an extra reading teacher, and except in Spears School, the principal essentially turned the project over to the reading teacher. In Spears the principal turned the project over to the assistant principal. Each school already had at least one reading teacher, some funded by Title I, and the others by the board. All of the schools formed a unit task force.

History of the Project

Project Initiation. In October 1971 the district was notified of a Right-To-Read meeting in Washington in November for large urban school districts and of provision of $100,000 in Right-To-Read funds as of January 1972. The Rockton delegation included Jones and Gross. The purpose of the meeting was to explain Right-To-Read to the districts that had been selected and to present the project guidelines. Jones' impressions of the meeting were mixed: "We had heard about Right-To-Read for years and then all of a sudden we get a hurry-up call from Washington and a package of money. Representatives from the large cities heard a rumor from one of the Right-To-Read staff that the suddenness of the grant was linked to a pre-election strategy."

This impression was reinforced by the apparent disorganization of the Right-To-Read staff as perceived by the Rockton group:

> Every few minutes there would be a short staff meeting among the R2R people to decide on the answer to a question from the audience. It looked like they were setting policy on the spot. I pointed out to them their January 1972 starting time was impossible since they wanted projects to conduct a needs assessment before January 1972 which was less than 90 days away--the amount of time they said was needed for a needs assessment.

Right-To-Read held a second meeting in Washington in January 1972 to explain Right-To-Read planning and needs assessment processes to the projects. Jones, Gross, and the principals of three of the four schools that had been selected attended. The Rockton people were amused by the suggestion that the planning charts be tacked up on the wall in what was dubbed a Right-To-Read "war room." Jones described the attitude of the principals toward Right-To-Read: "They were pleased that the grant was assured rather than spending a great deal of time in planning a proposal and then having it rejected."

Selection of the Four Schools. The four schools in the project were selected by a central office committee and Jones. He got a list of reading scores for all the schools in the district, and per Right-To-Read instructions selected a list of schools whose reading scores were in the lowest quartile. Then he called a meeting of district staff to discuss the list and select four schools. They called Washington and asked if they couldn't spread the money around to more than the three schools specified in the Right-To-Read guidelines, and were told no. A compromise was reached on four schools.

One school, Saltair, refused to participate, because the principal felt that his teachers were already overworked.

The two schools selected as impact sites were Drew, because it was implementing the Wisconsin Design as part of the "field-test pattern" for the Wisconsin

Research and Development Center, and Spears, because of its resource center and tutor program. Brewster was chosen because it had the worst reading scores in the district, and Martin because it satisfied the Right-To-Read criterion for a transition site and was experiencing racial problems. The district thought that a little extra money there would divert attention from the racial problem and "cool things off a little." Jones said that there was no competition among the schools for selection and no input from Gross on which schools should be selected.

First-Year Implementation. Right-To-Read expected school districts to select their unit task forces and complete the needs assessment and planning process by May 1972, but Rockton did not respond until July. All of the schools complained that selecting a unit task force took time, and that they found it hard to carry out the needs assessment and planning processes.

Funding Delay. By the end of the first year of the project (August 1972), the schools had managed to spend only $10,000 of their first year's $100,000 allotment. Ms. Betty Brown, the federal project officer, read the project proposal, saw the $90,000 of carryover funds, and decided to hold up the second-year grant and make changes in the project. She remembers that Rockton did not appear to have a replication strategy (for the impact schools to work with the two schools with weak reading programs) and no plan for coordinating in-service staff development with project objectives. Consequently, she held up project funding and made a trip to the project to straighten things out. As a result of the meetings, Rockton reworked its project plan to Ms. Brown's satisfaction, and the project monies were released by December 1972. She thinks she had a major effect on the project in redirecting it toward the Right-To-Read approach.

The project staff rewrote its proposal, but for reasons that will become clear below, and in the words of a project staff member, there was little change in the project. The large carryover in the first year reflected the decisions of the project schools to hire reading teachers with most of their funds, and the district procedures that made it impossible to hire staff before September 1972.

During the funding delay, the project carried the reading teachers and other staff (classroom aides and the evaluator) on board funds. There was a delay in purchasing some materials, although the consequences were not severe because most of these were ordered in the summer of 1972.

Implementation. The project has gone smoothly. There have been a few changes in personnel, some modification of the reading programs in the schools, and some significant changes in the in-service component; but the project has been implemented pretty much as planned.

The lack of adaptation probably reflects the simplicity of the changes that were attempted, the specificity of the project plans, and the freedom that Right-To-Read gave each school to decide what it would implement.

In-Service Training. Between the second and third years of the project, two significant changes were made in the in-service component: The in-service sessions were changed from a schedule of after-hours and Saturdays to one of released time, and each school planned and conducted its own in-service sessions, instead of attending common in-service sessions.

The change to site-specific in-service was made by mutual agreement between the schools and project staff, who felt that the first year of in-service training was not as effective as it should have been. Even though teachers were paid $6.50 (out of Right-To-Read funds) to attend each session, attendance was only 50 percent. The teachers were just not interested in giving up their free time for in-service training in reading. The project staff and most of the teachers we talked with said that the format was poor. Each school was implementing a somewhat different reading program, and it was therefore hard to plan in-service sessions that would meet everyone's needs. Also, most of the sessions were lectures by district office staff or outside consultants, with no follow-up in the classroom. As the Right-To-Read project officer had thought from the original project proposal, Rockton did not have its in-service closely coordinated with the program objectives at each site.

In the second year, each site planned its own series of workshop sessions, and almost every teacher we talked with in schools that had a good reading teacher said that these sessions were much better. Some teachers were enthusiastic about the third-year in-service sessions.

The switch to conducting in-service during released time instead of after hours was stipulated by Right-To-Read, and Jones says that this has turned out to be a good idea. He thinks teachers respond more favorably to and get more out of released-time in-service. He now plans to use the idea in other in-service sessions that he is organizing.

Between the second and third years, Right-To-Read also stipulated that 85 percent of project funds had to be spent on staff development and that only $600 per professional would be provided in the project schools. This resulted in a lower third-year budget for the project, but there were carryover funds available from the previous year that Right-To-Read allowed the district to use to make up the difference. If the carryover had not been available, the project schools would have had a difficult time continuing the classroom aides funded by the project.

Project Components

Unit Task Forces. Except in one school (Martin), the unit task forces, which were appointed by principals, had little to do with the Right-To-Read project. The needs assessment was done by the school staff, with parents and other outsiders called in for periodic review meetings. The dominant themes in comments about the unit task force were "The technical language was incomprehensible to them" and "They couldn't attend all the meetings." Most unit task forces collapsed after the first year.

The one school where the unit task force was active had one community member who was already active in the school and another member who took great interest in the project, even to the extent of redoing the needs assessment himself. This unit task force has been very active in lobbying for board support to continue the project. A letter-writing campaign was organized and produced 365 letters to the district office from parents.

Needs Assessment. Right-To-Read requires each participating school to conduct a needs assessment as part of a specified process for planning its reading improvement program. It is a detailed procedure for assessing the reading inadequacies of students in the school, the instructional inadequacies of teachers, the appropriateness of reading curricula used, and the reading resources available from the district.

All four principals turned the responsibility for performing needs assessment over to someone else. In three of the schools, most of the work was done by the Right-To-Read reading teacher and the Title I reading teacher; in the fourth school (Spears) the work was done by the assistant principal and the Title I reading teacher. All involved reported extreme frustration and anger while they were doing needs assessment ("It was a monster"), but in retrospect they all praised needs assessment as worthwhile.

Despite these testimonials, none of the schools made large changes in their reading curricula as a result of conducting needs assessment. Three schools switched from a multitext curriculum (which means that each teacher chose her own basal reader) to single basal texts (different ones in each school). These texts did include skill-based diagnostic tests at the end of component books; however, these are administered at intervals of several months and instruction has not been highly individualized. There has been a trend in the district for some time, which is spreading school by school, away from the multitext approach to single basal readers.

One of the principals we interviewed said that the reason for the trend toward single texts in Rockton is concern about gaps in the district's reading curriculum.

The fourth school in the project (Drew) continued to implement the Wisconsin Design as one of the test sites in the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning program to develop its reading system.

One school (Spears) did not actually switch to a single basal text until one year after needs assessment was conducted. The school's reading teacher was not convinced of the need to change, and until the school administration shifted her to another position, the school continued with largely its old reading program. In this case, needs assessment may have taught school leadership something about reading improvement which could not be implemented until the reading teacher could be moved out of the way.

One concrete use of needs assessment that we found was in Drew School, where the principal showed the results of the teacher assessment to one of his poorer teachers ("who was afraid to go out on her own") as an inducement to get her to change.

Needs assessment seems to be useful mostly as a means of collecting information that would not ordinarily be available to school leadership (such as describing the materials the teachers are using in their classroom), and as a teaching device. The systems analysis philosophy underlying the Right-To-Read needs assessment is radically different from how principals and teachers normally think about curriculum in their schools. (The principal in Spears School said this directly.) Therefore, needs assessment may teach the participants something about systematic curriculum planning. Some of the staff also said that they had learned something about planning an educational program that they could use in other ways. When asked if they would ever again conduct needs assessment on their own, they usually said yes, if the procedure were simplified. However, the person responsible for Right-To-Read in Spears School who was asked this question and who is now the principal in another school has not performed needs assessment in her school and has no plans to do so. (She also has no extra resources to get the required testing done, or to buy materials and in-service training.)

Needs assessment may also have a communications effect; we heard such comments as these: "It apprised the staff of its deficiencies," "A lot of thinking came from just sitting there and talking," and "We had never sat down before and gone over our reading program in this school."

One principal said that needs assessment was essential to prevent fragmentation of Right-To-Read money. He argued that since a Right-To-Read school gets its money before a plan is written, there needs to be a decision mechanism. Otherwise, he asserts, the teachers will get separate claims on the money and the program will go off in all directions at once. Obviously, this depends on the leadership characteristics of the principal.

Needs assessment was extremely difficult for staff members to perform. The terms were without meaning to them, the requirements for data collection (testing kids and teachers) onerous, and the purpose unclear. The people who did needs assessment were not the people who went to Washington. The technical assistants sent out from Right-To-Read technical assistance teams gave conflicting instructions. In the words of one respondent, "We were all so insecure ourselves about the whole process that it was hard to handle conflicting opinions." There were three different technical assistants who came in the early days of the project, but only one was given high marks by the project.

Curriculum and Instructional Changes. All of the schools concentrated their efforts on the primary grades, especially in the first and second years of the project, contrary to Right-To-Read's whole-school concept. In the third year, most of the schools moved toward involving the upper grades, but less intensively than at the primary level.

The reason for the emphasis on the primary grades is not entirely clear, but there are several factors. Some said that Right-To-Read policy was to start at the lower grades and then work upward to the higher grades in successive years, but this is not true. One factor is that the technical assistance provided by Right-To-Read recommended concentrating on the lower grades. Another is that one of the district office curriculum specialists most involved with Right-To-Read is a primary specialist. Third, the general movement in the district toward prevention instead of remediation may have had an effect.

The reading program in Drew School is impressive. The testing program is highly organized, and cross-age grouping is used for skill instruction, with different teachers specializing in different reading skills. Students are tested diagnostically and regrouped for specialized instruction every few weeks. Record-keeping and regrouping are thorough and are done by the project reading teacher. Ample materials are available.

Technical Assistance. The project staff is almost unanimous in its praise of one of the Right-To-Read-provided technical advisers. He visited most of the project schools about once a year and gave some of the in-service sessions. His visits to the project were helpful in moving at least one of the schools toward more change. In Martin School he saw that very little was happening and relayed this information to Jones and Trail, who were aware of the situation but did not take any action. He also told the Martin principal. Trail was then able to assign a new Right-To-Read reading teacher, who has accomplished more than her predecessor (all that had to be done was switch the position of the board-funded and the Right-To-Read reading teachers in the school). The first Right-To-Read reading teacher spent most of his time with children and virtually no time working with teachers. Trail says that the technical adviser's judgment was influential in enabling the central office to get the reading teachers changed.

Replication Strategy. Right-To-Read's idea of having the two impact schools (Drew and Spears) assist the two other schools in the project (Brewster and Martin) did not work very well. The plan in the project proposal (as rewritten) was to have Drew help the other schools in using the diagnostic tests from the Wisconsin Design. Spears was to help the other schools build versions of its resource center and to install its tutoring program. However, only one of these transfers has occurred: Martin School has built a resource center modeled on the one in Spears. The tutoring program didn't spread because Spears dropped the activity itself at the end of the second year. The resource center didn't transfer to Brewster because it "discovered" that it didn't have the required physical space. Once Brewster, Martin, and Spears had decided to adopt basal programs containing diagnostic tests, it was no longer attractive for them to think about using Drew's Wisconsin Design tests, which are far more sophisticated than the texts and the tests in the basal programs that they had adopted.

Interestingly, an unplanned transfer has occurred between Martin and Drew. The latter has picked up a high school tutoring program started in Martin by a person on the Martin unit task force who is heavily involved in school activities. This program was presented to all city high schools for their consideration.

Evaluation. About 5 percent of project resources were spent on the project evaluation, but not much resulted. Each school wrote its own objectives and was assisted by the project evaluator in writing criteria for these objectives. As a result, none of the objectives was very difficult to achieve. As an example, one of the comprehensive objectives in most of the schools was to have students' scores on the Cooperative Primary Test exceed by two points the weighted mean of the school's scores over the past three years. Leaving aside numerous measurement problems involved in this criterion, a school's reading scores could decline over a year's time and still meet the objective.

The evaluator sends the results to the principals, but she has "no idea" what they do with them.

Continuation. The Right-To-Read money ended in August 1974, and the district will continue two of the reading teachers on local funds and will find other jobs for the other reading teachers and aides hired by the project.

Dissemination. The project had no discernible effects on other Rockton schools.

BRICKTON

John G. Wirt

Brickton is an old seaport city in the Northeast that has been largely rebuilt in the last decade and now supports a diversified manufacturing industry. Its population of over 1 million is almost half black. Long considered a center of learning, the city boasts more than 30 colleges in the area.

The Brickton Right-To-Read project is especially interesting as a change agent study: It has followed the Right-To-Read strategy more closely and has tried to implement diagnostic/prescriptive reading in many more schools than any other project we visited. The Right-To-Read program office considers the Brickton project to be one of the most--if not the most--successful of its large-city projects. Despite this billing, however, events in the districts have caused severe implementation problems, and the project is far behind schedule. Nevertheless, the stage has been set for a citywide impact on reading in the next few years.

THE DISTRICT

Leadership

The superintendent came to the Brickton school district several years ago and has moved aggressively to bring change to the school system. He has implemented a total reorganization of the school district and initiated a citywide training program in teaching by objectives. For the current school year, the superintendent has established ten systemwide priorities to continue his program to strengthen the school district's instructional programs, organizational structures, and operational procedures. These priorities are to:

- Improve achievement levels in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- Continue the development of programs that elicit improved student adjustment behaviors.
- Improve the quality and increase the frequency of communications.
- Build improved internal and external human relationships.
- Improve the quality and extent of community contact and participation.
- Reexamine and redevelop support services to ensure that they enhance the educational process.

- Decrease the time required to obtain services from the support areas of the school system.
- Make available written operational guidelines and procedures that further refine and clarify individual roles for all functional units of the school system.
- Ensure that assessment and evaluation are facets of all plans and implementation strategies.
- Continue to develop and implement accountability procedures for all persons concerned with schools, including students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

The superintendent has widely publicized his plans for the school district and has appeared frequently on television to discuss educational issues in Brickton. Because of his ambitious program and his strong leadership style, he is widely recognized in the community as an educational leader, but also is a subject of controversy.

From the outset, the Brickton Right-To-Read project has had the full support of the superintendent. He has consistently supported the project administratively and discussed it frequently on television, radio, and through the newspapers. Often the Right-To-Read project is referred to as the superintendent's project; but, because of the superintendent's strong role in the district, this has had both positive and negative effects on the project. Even considering the negative effects, however, the Right-To-Read staff believes that without the superintendent's support much of its work would not have been possible.

Citywide Right-To-Read

When the superintendent was informed that federal Right-To-Read monies were available for reading improvement, he immediately made plans to develop a project for Brickton. He saw the $100,000 grant from Right-To-Read as an opportunity to spearhead a citywide reading improvement effort and to implement his priority on reading. Responsibility for developing a plan was assigned to a group of key personnel, including the assistant superintendent for elementary schools, the assistant superintendent for secondary education, a reading specialist in the district, and an area supervisor. A plan was produced and taken to the second national meeting of Right-To-Read project directors in January 1972. Brickton was the only large city school system to have a plan prepared for this meeting.

Reorganization

Soon after the initiation of the Right-To-Read project, the superintendent completely reorganized the Brickton city school district. The traditional elementary/secondary/special education form of organization was replaced by a decentralized system, where there are nine regional superintendents, each with his own sizable staff of former central office personnel. The central office had been assigned the role of providing staff support to the nine regional superintendents. This reorganization occurred at the beginning of the 1973-74 school year, and, as will be described, had a big impact on the Right-To-Read project and a convulsive one on the school district as a whole. Everyone in the district administration had to reapply for a job in the new organization. Before the year was over, many people had left the school district for other jobs. There was a nationwide search for new administrators, and some people were brought in from the outside.

Part of the reorganization included the creation of an Office of Reading, whose problems illustrate how the reorganization affected Right-To-Read. The change in staff placed persons in the Office of Reading in positions that had previously been held by their superiors. Some teachers' sentiments were with their former superiors, thereby causing them to divide their loyalties or resent the new persons in the reading office.

Reorganization itself brought with it a new concept of function and responsibility for the total staff; but mainly for those in central administration. Persons who were once known as supervisors and had easy access to the schools were no longer known by this title, nor was it clear that they had the same visiting privileges that they once had. It was believed that this privilege belonged now to the regional teams, with central office administrators providing support service on request.

Reorganization affected the citywide Right-To-Read effort both positively and negatively. On one hand, reorganization provided staff in the area offices who could be trained to conduct citywide staff development in the schools. On the other hand, reorganization disrupted lines of authority and communications in the district, which created problems in delivering Right-To-Read to the schools.

The school year 1974-75 has seen a "clarification" of the role of the central office staff, which now makes for more of a partnership between central office and regional teams.

Teaching by Objectives

For the 1973-74 school year, the teaching by objectives (TBO) method was instituted through a series of training workshops for teachers conducted in the fall by members of the area administrations. Attendance at the workshop was required and this caused much concern among the teaching staff. But, even though teachers resented having to attend the workshops, most did.

The teaching by objectives initiative interacts with Right-To-Read, since the Right-To-Read diagnostic/prescriptive method of teaching reading amounts to teaching by objectives in reading. This interaction has both good and bad consequences.

On the positive side, several people in both the schools and the Right-To-Read office commented that Right-To-Read brings teaching by objectives "front and center" to the teachers; that it makes teaching by objectives more believable to teachers because teachers accept this method as a realistic way to teach reading. For other subjects, such as English literature or social studies, teachers see teaching by objectives as a rather contrived method. On the other hand, because Right-To-Read and teaching by objectives are so similar in concept, the training that teachers have received in the technique may assist in implementing Right-To-Read.

On the negative side, many teachers are infuriated by teaching by objectives, especially because of the top-down way that it was introduced. Thus, to the extent that Right-To-Read and teaching by objectives are associated in the minds of the teachers, Right-To-Read may encounter greater resistance. This probably will depend partly on whether or not teaching by objectives is oversold.

Thus far the effort of teaching by objectives on teaching in Brickton has been inconclusive. Some teachers comply in form with the mandate by writing objectives for some of their teaching, but partly because it has been introduced as a system-wide effort and required of all teachers. Many teachers say that teaching by objectives is nothing new, that they've been doing it all the time, that it hasn't had any effect on what they do in the classroom. Overall, it is hard to conclude what the effects of the teaching by objectives initiative on the district have been or will be.

State Board Requirements

During the 1972-73 school year, the second year of Right-To-Read, the state board passed a requirement that all elementary, English, and social studies teachers in the state must obtain three credits in the teaching of reading by 1975. Although

Right-To-Read had nothing to do with this action, the prominence of Right-To-Read in the city led teachers naturally to believe, by association, that it was responsible. Right-To-Read began getting calls from teachers asking if any money was available to pay for the required training. At that time the district had no reimbursement program, and the three credits would cost teachers $135. Right-To-Read moved to remedy this situation by approaching the board for approval of Right-To-Read in-service training as qualifying for the three credits. The proposal presented the board was approved and made it possible for teachers to receive three credits for Right-To-Read in-service staff development.

Right-To-Read staff believes that the state board's approval of the in-service training is essential to the success of the program. The approval gives status to Right-To-Read's in-service training and is a direct financial reward to the teachers.

Provisional Teachers

Also during this period a new state certification law was passed requiring all provisional teachers to gain certification within two years, have their status reevaluated, or lose their jobs. Needless to say, this also created dissension in the school district, even though it was a state action.

Finances

The final school budget in Brickton is determined by the city government, and not by the school board. Because a municipal board is the final authority on the school budget, budgeting must be a three-step process: First, the school board negotiates with the school district, the Public School Supervisors and Administrators Association, and the Public School Teachers Association (PSTA) over a tentative budget for the schools. This budget is then sent to the municipal board and city council for approval. Usually the municipal board cuts the school board's budget back substantially, partly because the school board is not given a planning figure to use in preparing its budget. When there is a large cutback in the tentative budget, a third step in the budget process is necessary--a complete reallocation of the school district budget by the administration. This increases the time and effort required to derive the actual budget, creates problems for the school district, and places the superintendent in a difficult negotiating position.

Strike

By the 1973-74 school year, the teachers' resentment had built up to the point where they went on strike after the municipal board offered them a small salary increase. More than 90 percent of the teachers walked out for over a month in the middle of the school year. The basic issue was pay, but there were other complaints that the papers picked up from teachers and publicized. These complaints centered on the lack of instructional materials and supplies in the schools and, related to Right-To-Read, the alleged waste of money in paying for substitutes for teachers attending in-service sessions when these teachers could be doing something "really useful like teaching kids." In negotiations with the school district and the board, however, Right-To-Read was not an issue.

At the time of our visit to Brickton three months after the strike, teachers and principals in the three schools that we visited were still extremely bitter toward the school district and what they saw as the superintendent's role in the conflict. They were angry about what they thought was his lack of support for their position during the strike and attributed a number of statements to him that they reported he made during the strike as the basis for their anger. After the strike, the superintendent decided that Right-To-Read and other systemwide activities would be postponed until the climate in the schools improved.

Although the strike and all the top-down changes that have been occurring in the district appear to have caused dissension among principals and teachers and created a difficult climate for Right-To-Read, the staff members that we interviewed in the three impact schools seemed to have separated Right-To-Read from their dissatisfactions and expressed strong support for the program. One comment was, "It will be good for Brickton if they can accomplish all they say they are going to do." Another comment was, "In the beginning we thought that Right-To-Read was the superintendent's program, but now we think it is ours. It's good for our schools."

Desegregation

The district is under the HEW desegregation order, and although there didn't seem to be any connection between this and the Right-To-Read project, the changes brought about by desegregation will affect the entire school system.

THE PROJECT

The Right-To-Read federal program office bills the Brickton project as one of the most successful projects, stressing its citywide aspect and the Criterion Performance Assessment (CPA) test that has been developed. The federal program office invited the Brickton project staff to a Right-To-Read sponsored meeting of the Great City Schools Conference, as one of the program's most successful projects.

There are really two parts to the Right-To-Read project: the ten impact sites, which are supported with Right-To-Read funds, and the rest of the schools in Brickton. The ten impact sites have been used as bases for developing and trying out a reading system and a training program that have been designed for implementing Right-To-Read in the rest of the city's schools. It is also planned that the ten impact schools will serve as demonstration sites for the citywide effort.

Project Components

The project consists of two main components: a reading system developed by the project, and a series of in-service training workshops for teachers and administrators.

The reading system that has been designed by the project consists of seven elements:

- A CPA test.
- A manual on how to administer the test.
- Profile sheets for recording and classroom storage of scores.
- A hierarchy of reading skills.
- A cross-referencing manual for the basal texts used in the district, indicating where teachers can find materials to teach specific skills.
- A manual on how to teach reading in content areas.
- A test to be administered at the end of the year to find out how well students have done.

At the time of our visit [illegible] Brickton, all of the elements except the post-test had been developed. These seven elements provide a means for skill-based instruction in reading, using texts already available in the district. In other words, schools will not have to change the reading materials that they are using in order to switch to skill-based instruction. The reading system is comparable in principle with Wisconsin Design, the High Intensity Learning System, or any of the other reading systems that are currently available on the market. A major aim of the reading system is the same as we have seen in several other districts: By recording a student's achievements on profile sheets, a record will be available of the student's reading ability that can be transferred from teacher to teacher as the student moves from grade to grade or changes schools.

The training component consists of three phases. The first phase concerns diagnostics: a description of the CPA test, how to administer it, and how to interpret the results. The second phase is prescription: How to use the results of the test in instruction, how to construct teacher-made tests for regular assessment of student progress, and how to do skill-based teaching by objectives in reading. The third phase consists of various components, with emphasis on teaching reading in content areas.

Project Staff

At the present time, the Right-To-Read staff consists of a project director and her assistant. These two work in conjunction with and out of the Office of Reading, which is headed by a person who was the project director in the first year. The three describe themselves as a close-knit team, who have their disagreements but who are united in their commitment to make Right-To-Read succeed. Compared with other projects that we have visited, the staff seemed to be much better qualified in reading and more capable in project management.

All three of the project staff came up from the ranks. One was a program assistant of remedial reading in the district; one was head of an English department in a secondary school; and another was responsible for staff development in Title I. The fact that staff members were promoted into their positions over more senior personnel has caused some resentment in the district office.

A special effort was made to recruit and select the project staff. The assistant superintendents submitted lists of candidates to the superintendent for the project director's and assistant project director's positions. The superintendent personally interviewed the candidates over a period of two months before making his final selections.

Effects of the Right-To-Read Project

Citywide, the effects of Right-To-Read appear to be largely at the awareness level and have fallen far short of full implementation of the reading system. In the words of a staff member when asked what the main effect of Right-To-Read had been on the district up to the time of our interview: "Everybody is focusing on reading now. Right-To-Read has become a password." Offered as evidence was the upsurge in applications for courses in reading at colleges; however, the state board requirement for three credits in reading may have more to do with this than Right-To-Read. The original plan called for complete, citywide implementation of all three phases by the end of the three-year project, at least to the point of having carried out all of the planned training, but the strike, elements of reorganization, and other implementation problems have disrupted the schedule. The original plan was probably idealistic; an effort to develop and implement a citywide reading system could hardly be successful in such a short time.

Also, the Brickton reading system had not been completely implemented in the ten impact schools, although more has been accomplished. The break-in testing using the CPA test was completed; teachers have mounted charts on the walls of their classroom showing the results of these tests, and a portion of each day's instruction is spent in skill-based instruction in reading. Over the course of a year, teachers appear to be covering about 8 to 10 reading skills. It is difficult to assess how much the teaching of reading has actually changed in the impact schools, because several of them were already moving toward skill-based instruction in reading. What Right-To-Read has provided are an orientation to the reading process, developed and printed tests for assessing reading skills, and staff training in the use and interpretation of these tests. Teachers were not generally aware of the cross-referencing manual, nor had they been trained in its use.

PROJECT INITIATION

The project initiation phase in the Brickton Right-To-Read project began in January 1972 and extended through September 1972. This period corresponded with the time of the first-year grant made to all large city Right-To-Read projects.

Selection of Project Sites

The ten impact sites were selected by ten area directors. The superintendent instructed each area director to choose one school but wanted the schools selected to represent a cross-section of city schools. There was to be one low-income, all black elementary school; one low-income, all white elementary school; one low-income mixed white and black elementary school; one middle-income mixed black and white elementary school; one mixed income, all black elementary school; one mixed income, all white elementary school; plus two high schools and two junior high schools. The superintendent's idea from the beginning has been that these impact sites will serve as demonstration sites for the citywide reading improvement effort and that they would be most useful for this purpose if they represented all segments of the school population. The area directors selected the schools and approached the principals to see if they would participate in the Right-To-Read project. All but one agreed, and a replacement for this school was found. There does not appear to have been any other overriding criteria in the selection of the impact site schools.

Brickton chose to call each of the ten schools impact sites. Each had various strengths in their reading programs but none fully satisfied the Right-To-Read guidelines for an exemplary reading program. It was thought that it would "not be good for morale" to label some schools as redirection or transition sites and label others as impact sites.

First-Year Activities

The project began with a series of meetings with principals in the impact schools and directors of the divisions in the district office to familiarize them with Right-To-Read. The team of assistant superintendents who had been assigned responsibility for planning the Right-To-Read project briefed the participants on the importance of the project for Brickton and on the nature and purposes of the national Right-To-Read effort. The new project staff briefed them on the Right-To-Read program in Brickton.

About this time, the team of assistant superintendents and the project staff came up with a rough plan for the citywide effort in reading. The first phase was to be an effort to implement Right-To-Read in the ten impact schools in the following year. Then in the second year each of the ten impact schools would train two other schools in the Right-To-Read method. This plan was presented to the superintendent, but he rejected it as requiring too much time to complete.

The project staff went back to the drawing boards and came up with an alternative plan. During the summer there would be an effort to develop a reading system for Brickton that would be the core of the citywide reading improvement effort.

During the following school year, this system would be implemented in the ten impact schools, and then, in the final year of the Right-To-Read grant, the reading system would be implemented in the rest of the city's schools. It was not clear at that point what the reading system would be or how the project would work in the first and second years.

As per Right-To-Read guidelines, each of the principals in the impact schools formed a unit task force to go through the needs assessment process and produce a project plan. It soon became apparent, however, that the parents on the task forces were not knowledgeable enough about reading, the district office person on the task force could not afford to spend much time planning a reading project, and the principals were busy with other things. As a result, the project staff decided to form a "dissemination team" in each of the impact schools to take over responsibility for Right-To-Read. The dissemination team was to consist of three or four school staff members appointed by the principal. Typical appointments were the vice-principal of the school, a reading teacher, and one or two senior teachers.

During the spring of 1972, dissemination team members report that they spent much of their time on Right-To-Read project activities: performing the needs assessment, seeing films of Right-To-Read projects in other locations, visiting nearby Right-To-Read projects, investigating various reading materials, and listening to presentations by publishers of reading textbooks. There was also training by members of the Right-To-Read staff in the various methods of reading instruction (linguistics, language experience, and so forth).

At first, the plan was to have members of the dissemination teams spend full time on Right-To-Read and be relieved of their classroom duties; but this didn't work out. Instead, substitutes were hired for dissemination team members when they needed to attend a Right-To-Read activity. This was because principals discovered that they would have to replace dissemination team members with a new teacher. According to district rules, a teacher relieved of her classroom duties for any reason must be replaced with a fresh-out-of-school teacher. Since most dissemination team members were senior teachers, and typically the more capable teachers in the school, principals were reluctant to trade them in for lower quality teachers.

Needs Assessment

Each dissemination team also performed a needs assessment for its school. Most dissemination teams used the results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), which is administered annually in most Brickton schools. The Right-To-Read staff went through the needs assessment page by page with the dissemination teams.

Unlike schools in other Right-To-Read projects, the dissemination teams in Brickton do not report that needs assessment was a difficult exercise. This is partly because of the training they had received from the Right-To-Read staff, and also because some schools had experience in skill-based teaching of reading. Needs assessment seems to have given the dissemination teams experience with the Right-To-Read approach in planning a reading program, and to have made them aware of alternative instructional methods in reading and the general needs in their schools, but not to have led to any major changes in their reading curricula. In the words of one dissemination team member, "We began to see different needs that we didn't know we had. Even the principals didn't know that we had these weaknesses. For example, we had English teachers teaching reading who had no training in reading."

One principal in elementary school said that she went through needs assessment even though she had done something similar before, and found it useful in pointing out to teachers where the school needed improvement. This principal discussed the results of needs assessment with all the teachers in her school in a group session. Needs assessment gave the teachers a picture of where there were weaknesses in reading instruction and set the stage for making changes.

Program Objectives

The impact schools went through the rest of the Right-To-Read planning process, including the selection of project objectives according to the prescribed procedure. However, a Right-To-Read staff member said that "Schools have not concentrated on these objectives in the prescribed manner because most principals felt that all of the objectives were equally important after actually getting into the program."

Summer of 1972

During the summer of 1972, dissemination teams were paid to attend a series of workshops at a nearby university to develop the six elements of the Brickton reading system. Those who attended got college credit for their work.

A great deal of effort in the summer session was allotted to developing the CPA test. The Right-To-Read staff says that the decision to develop this test was made as a result of the needs assessments conducted in the schools.

The Right-To-Read team was aided in its effort by the technical assistant provided by the national office, who was a professor at the university where the summer sessions were conducted and a recognized authority in diagnostic/prescriptive reading. He arranged for space where Right-To-Read staff members could conduct their meetings and spent a great deal of time working with them.

We pressed project staff members hard on why they decided to develop their own reading test when a number of other commercially published tests are available. The general tenor of the replies was that the Brickton school district had had considerable experience with commercially produced reading tests and found them inappropriate for use in inner-city schools. Another factor was that the cost of purchasing commercial tests would have been prohibitive for a citywide program. An elementary school principal said that involvement was the reason why they decided to develop their own test: "We did it so everybody could feel a part of the project." Stated another way, the reading improvement effort might be more acceptable to the Brickton city schools if it could be pointed out that everything had been locally developed to meet local needs.

Other groups in the summer workshop devoted themselves to developing the other parts of the reading system: the manual of reading in the content areas and the manual concerning performance objectives.

By the end of the summer, the workshops had produced a draft of the CPA test, the design for writing performance objectives, the format for the profile sheets, and the manual on reading in the content areas. With these materials, they were ready for the first year of implementation in the impact schools.

FIRST YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION

The first year of implementation began in the fall of 1972 and extended through the summer of 1973.

Activities in the Impact Schools

Early in the fall of 1972, the dissemination team members began attending a series of workshops conducted by the Right-To-Read staff. The teams received training in administering and interpreting criterion-referenced and norm-referenced tests, in designing prescriptions based on performance objectives, in the use of readability graphs and formulas, and in teaching reading in the content areas.

After these training sessions, each site developed a plan for disseminating the information in each impact school. Each school team had until February to train the entire faculty. The dissemination teams also presented two additional days of in-service training after the close of the 1972-73 school year.

The CPA tests were administered in the impact sites after the training had been completed in each school. The results were charted on profile sheets and made available to the Right-To-Read staff.

Because the in-service training focused on the CPA test and because the cross-referenced guide to materials for teaching specific skills was not available, the first year of implementation in the impact schools amounted to a field test of the CPA instrument. The project staff did require that teachers in the impact schools copy test results on wall charts and fill out profile sheets for each student, and the teachers appear to have complied with this request. Members of the project staff announced that they would be around to see that each teacher had completed a wall chart and filled out the profile sheets. The effect on teaching is hard to estimate, but almost uniformly the teachers report that the charts were used to assign students to skill groups for reading. One principal said that at first the wall charts went up because "We were told to put them up, but after awhile they went up voluntarily." The schools expressed surprisingly few misgivings about mounting test scores on the classroom wall. There were a few comments about the effect on low-achieving students, but not many.

Public Relations Campaign

The other main activity in the first implementation year was a vigorous city-wide public relations campaign. A mobile van toured the schools and communities demonstrating "the Right-To-Read program." There were radio and television programs, displays at shopping centers, and leaflets distributed to homes in some areas. The Right-To-Read staff reported that radio stations were cooperative and donated time for Right-To-Read spot announcements. One advertising company contributed free billboard space. The publicity campaign dramatized the virtues of being able to read, such as getting better jobs and staying out of trouble. The publicity campaign was reduced in the second year, as the project was concerned with other activities. The assistant superintendent for curriculum, for one, thinks that the publicity campaign should be resumed. She thinks that the publicity creates a favorable climate for Right-To-Read and that otherwise the only publicity is the complaints that make their way into the newspapers.

Brickton Improvement Plan

Midway in the first year, the superintendent announced that beginning with the 1973-74 school year all schools would be expected to administer the CPA test to all students and develop a plan to implement Right-To-Read. Schools were given a broad outline of the Brickton Right-To-Read program and each was asked to develop a detailed plan and schedule for implementation.

With the announcement of the testing program, teachers began grumbling about the amount of extra work they would be expected to do and began to question the purpose of an assessment program when it was not to be followed by a program that would "have a real effect on kids." The charge was, "The kids are tested all the time, and nothing is ever done with the results." The need became apparent for some means of relieving the testing burden on teachers.

The assistant superintendent turned to two district office staff members and asked them to prepare a detailed plan for citywide implementation of Right-To-Read. They produced a manual, the Brickton Improvement Plan (BIP), which presented a conventional approach to reading improvement.

The BIP sought to create a large steering committee of representatives from all departments of the district office and the schools to implement Right-To-Read. This committee would plan a large meeting to which each school would send three disseminators. At the meeting there would be an all-day session emphasizing various reading techniques and procedures, and stressing reading motivation as the key to success. Following the meeting, representatives were to go back to their schools and replicate what they had heard.

Right-To-Read requested a meeting with the superintendent and convinced him that the BIP manual did not reflect the plan for reading improvement that the Right-To-Read staff had developed. The BIP manual called, for example, for the administration of an informal reading inventory as the first step in a reading improvement program, instead of the CPA test. Furthermore, the Right-To-Read staff had developed training programs and the dissemination team concept, and none of these was reflected in the BIP approach. It was agreed that a more compatible procedure should be developed and that the Right-To-Read office would be responsible for managing citywide implementation of Right-To-Read.

Support of the Superintendent

The Brickton Right-To-Read project has had strong backing from the superintendent, and staff members feel that this support has been essential. For example, in the beginning the Right-To-Read staff ran into some resistance from impact schools on implementing Right-To-Read. The Right-To-Read staff brought these troubles to the attention of the superintendent, who called several meetings to emphasize the importance of Right-To-Read in the district. After these meetings, the Right-To-Read staff got more cooperation from impact schools.

Summer Workshops

In the summer of 1973, the Right-To-Read program supported a number of workshops for impact school staff members to refine the CPA test and prepare for citywide implementation of Right-To-Read. During the workshops, the staff also developed curriculum materials to be used for diagnostic/prescriptive teaching. Some of these materials have been incorporated into the citywide training model, but some have not been used at this point because they need revision. The Right-To-Read staff plans to solicit the cooperation of some regional team members and impact staff members in helping to make these revisions and to prepare these materials for distribution during the 1974-75 school year.

SECOND YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION

Through the cooperation of the superintendent and the regional offices, and in response to the feedback from local schools, the Right-To-Read staff produced a three-phase plan for citywide improvement that was designed to be carried out during the 1973-74 school year. Phase I was designed (1) to give school staff an overview of the scope and sequence of the Right-To-Read plans for a citywide effort in reading; (2) to familiarize them with the significance of using norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests in planning an effective instructional program; and (3) to acquaint the staff with the administration, scoring, and charting of the CPA test results. This phase was to be completed in September. Phase II was to focus on the interpretation and planning for utilization of the test results, as well as classroom management, prescription writing, and teaching strategies to incorporate the ITBS and CPA test results into an instructional model. Phase II was to be completed by January 1974. Phase III, which would deal with such areas as an in-depth study of reading in the content areas, the development of study skills, and the acquisition of effective questioning techniques, was to be offered by May 1974.

Dissemination Team Training

Another part of the plan involved the training of newly organized administrative staff in the nine regions by the Right-To-Read staff, who in turn would train dissemination teams in each of the schools. The regions were told after the training to select staff for working with the dissemination teams who had classroom experience and to use others in support roles. But the regions didn't always do this, and many persons who had no classroom experience were assigned to work with dissemination teams in the schools. As a result of this slippage and other problems, the training of the dissemination teams gradually broke down. "We forgot," one staff member said, "how hard it is to get people to follow directions."

Phase I Implementation (Citywide)

The superintendent's decision to proceed with Phase I (citywide) testing in the fall meant that the Right-To-Read project had to arrange for printing enough copies of the tests so that every student in the school district would have the test suggested for his grade or reading level. Also, numerous decisions had to be made on which of the more than 40 component tests would be administered to students in what grade levels and in what time sequence. In the words of staff members, they soon realized that they were "into a mammoth job." Over seven million tests would have to be printed and distributed to the schools within the first month of school.

The staff wanted to have the tests printed by a commercial publisher, but the municipal board had a freeze on using outside contractors except in emergency circumstances; the staff was forced to consider alternatives. To save money and to avoid having to make an appeal to the municipal board, the staff arranged with the vocational education department of the school district to print the tests. This way the only money cost would be for paper and ink to print the tests, since student labor could be used to do the work free.

By September it was clear that the tests would not be available on schedule, and the date for testing had to be changed. Printing the tests with student labor turned out to be a gigantic job. The print shop was having trouble keeping track of the tests and didn't print them in the order planned by Right-To-Read. These problems necessitated changes in the schedule for testing in the schools, and the schools were notified that their dates for testing would have to be delayed.

By late fall, Right-To-Read began to get a flow of tests into the schools, and to get some returns. When the tests began to come back, though, unanticipated problems began to emerge that caused further delays. Some schools had received the wrong tests and were sending in incorrect ones. Right-To-Read traced down the problem and discovered that the print shop had gotten hold of the unrevised version of some of the tests. During the summer of 1973, many of the tests in the CPA package had been revised, to correct for problems uncovered when the tests were used in the impact schools. Right-To-Read also discovered that due to the late delivery of tests, some schools had borrowed tests from the impact schools and made copies so that they could meet their testing deadline. Consequently, these were also the wrong tests.

During January, Right-To-Read staff members also discovered that they did not have enough tests. The print shop had not been counting tests exactly; instead, they had been estimating numbers of tests and adding a few extra to make sure that there were enough. As a result, there were not enough tests to go around, since planning had been for exact numbers to be distributed to the schools.

The problems with printing the tests are another example of the implications of attempting a project as ambitious as Brickton's and expecting quick success. The print shop worked long and hard to finish the tests on time, but had no experience with such a large and complex job.

Then in February the strike hit, and testing had to come to a halt. The distribution system broke down and would have to be started all over again.

During the strike, the school system people realized that they couldn't proceed with full implementation of the Right-To-Read program after the strike. It would take the month of March to get going again, April would be interrupted by the spring break, and May is windup time; so they decided to proceed with the assessment testing at a reduced pace and to offer workshops on interpreting tests to any school that wanted to participate. They got 40 to 50 requests and provided the workshops.

Communications

These and other Phase I problems gave the teachers the impression at the time that Right-To-Read was disorganized. The teachers are at the receiving end of project activities and see the mistakes but do not have much idea of the scope of Right-To-Read activities or the ways in which the project is affected by factors that the teachers can't see.

Because of the project's scope and complexity, the project staff has found it necessary to communicate with principals and teachers through newsletters, TV, and other media; and to expect that the teachers will assume responsibility for keeping themselves informed. But the project has had difficulty with notices getting lost in the mail (partly attributable to effects of the reorganization), and teachers have not always taken the time to keep informed. As a result, effective communications have been a problem in the project.

Other Reading Systems

Throughout the implementation of Right-To-Read, the school system has had to deal with overtures from commercial publishers to purchase similar commercial reading management systems. At one point, the director of another federally funded program in the district (and formerly responsible for reading in the district) decided to buy one of these systems, and Right-To-Read became concerned.

In a meeting with the superintendent, it was agreed that all reading systems should be compatible with Right-To-Read, and the publisher of the new system was directed to work with Right-To-Read to make the two systems compatible. The two systems are now matched.

PSTA Evaluation

As part of the strike settlement, the PSTA won the right to conduct an evaluation of the Right-To-Read program. A committee of 14 people was selected to conduct this evaluation, including parents, other representatives of the community, PSTA members, and district staff; the assistant superintendent for curriculum heads the committee. Two meetings have been held to decide on issues and a format for the evaluation.

The Right-To-Read staff says that the evaluation is a good opportunity to establish a two-way communication with the teachers. Through the evaluation, staff members will be able to explain what they are attempting to do and will obtain, they say, valuable feedback on improvements that need to be made. In view of the variables that hindered the implementation of the original citywide plan for reading improvement, the evaluation committee has suggested that a revised schedule of 1974-75 activities be prepared, and the Right-To-Read staff is preparing that now.

Another issue that will be dealt with by the committee is how to obtain greater involvement of teachers in the citywide reading effort. There is a feeling that Right-To-Read's implementation design fails to give the schools a clear picture of future activities and to motivate them to participate in the program. One PSTA representative believes strongly that Right-To-Read needs assessment is a valuable instrument in motivating schools to change their reading programs and implement diagnosis and prescription. She has urged the adoption of a recommendation that needs assessment be used citywide.

Another issue raised by the evaluation committee is the additional load on the teachers resulting from the need to score tests and fill out profile sheets. To handle this problem, Right-To-Read is arranging with the district's Center for Planning Research and Evaluation to procure a commercial computer program for scoring Right-To-Read tests and printing profile sheets. This will be offered to the schools as a free service to lighten the teachers' load.

CONTINUATION

The Brickton school district plans to continue with citywide implementation of Right-To-Read next year, either at district expense or with federal funds if these are made available by the federal Right-To-Read program. The plan will be to restart at the beginning of Phase I and follow through with the entire sequence of training activities.

DISSEMINATION

Brickton has had over a hundred inquiries for copies of its CPA test, as a consequence of an article on the project in an International Reading Association Newsletter. Plans are being developed to respond to these inquiries.

LINDATON

John G. Wirt and Todd I. Endo

Lindaton is a middle- to upper-middle class residential suburb (population 50,000) of a large midwestern city. The school district is known for its quality teaching staff and innovative practices. Although near the central city, Lindaton is only now experiencing the in-migration of blacks.

According to the basic idea of the diagnostic reading instruction project, the Lindaton school district would train a corps of teachers to become reading resource teachers, who would then be assigned to individual schools to work with teachers in improving reading instruction methods. Diagnostic/prescriptive methods of reading instruction were to be emphasized.

The project has undergone considerable change in activities over the three years of funding: First-year training sessions were conducted by a reading consultant from a local university; but the project reading teachers did not feel that they were getting adequate training, and in the second year they decided to reorganize the project. The reorganization involved shifting to a series of workshops for classroom teachers on various aspects of reading instruction developed by the project reading teachers, with follow-up into the classroom and assistance to teachers expressing an interest in the ideas discussed. The project was also to include development and implementation of a reading system for the district, but little was done until the third year, when the superintendent directed the project to switch its major effort to implementation of the Wisconsin Design in all of the district's schools.

THE DISTRICT

The Community

Lindaton is unique in that its income distribution is unusually broad for a city of its size, which ranges from relatively poor in the northern, predominantly black part of the town, to the very affluent in the southern, predominantly white, part of town, which is near a nationally recognized private university. In recent years, blacks from the adjacent central city have migrated to Lindaton, and in 1973-74 accounted for 61 percent of the school population, compared with 39 percent in 1971. Because of the racial and income distribution in the community, there are great differences among the student populations of the schools; for example, one school in the northern part of town is in a poor section and 99 percent black, while one school in the south is about 95 percent white and in a section where lawyers, doctors, and professors live.

The School System

The school system has a total of 8500 students in one high school, one junior high (grades 8 and 9), one middle school (grades 6 and 7), and 8 elementary schools (K through 5). Most facilities are old, about 40 years on the average, but all seem to be in good repair. The per pupil expenditure in 1974 was $1250.

Like many school systems, Lindaton faces financial pressures due to reduction in school age population and a resistance to increased spending. As a result, fewer new teachers are entering the system. The average teacher's salary in 1974 was over $11,500, indicating that many teachers are at the maximum salary level. There are many more teachers with more than fifteen years' experience than with less than five years.

Nine years ago the school district began to decentralize its decisionmaking process concerning staffing, curriculum, and other instructional matters. The principals were given great autonomy in hiring, and the teachers have great autonomy in classroom and instructional activities. This presents problems for any centralized attempt to improve instructions, such as through federally funded projects.

In reading, the autonomy of principals and teachers in curriculum decision-making has resulted in enormous diversity in the range of basal readers and reading instructional materials used in classrooms. A comprehensive list of all the instructional material and basal readers used in the district, compiled by a project staff member, continues for over 40 pages of single-spaced, double-columned entries.

Classroom organization and organization of teachers in a school is determined completely by teacher and principal preference. In one school the range may be from a single teacher with 30 children to a team of five teachers and two aides working with a non-graded group of 90 children. Within a classroom, the organization also is diverse enough to include almost any imaginable arrangement.

The school system is changing slowly to accommodate the needs of the black population. Among professional staff, the whites outnumber blacks, but there is one black elementary school principal, a black high school principal, a black junior high school principal, a few blacks in the central office, and two black reading teachers. In 1973 the system reorganized its secondary school system to promote integration, by creating the middle school, but left its elementary schools alone. There had been riots and great turbulence in the school system following the invasion of Cambodia; results have been greater student participation in decisionmaking, greater emphasis on black studies, and a new principal in the high school.

Innovation

Lindaton has had a reputation as a good, progressive school system. There has always been an emphasis on innovation, and many projects over the years have introduced new ideas. In 1974 the district had fourteen outside-funded programs which accounted for about 8 percent of the total school district budget. The district has become experienced in writing proposals for federal projects and even provides workshops in proposal writing for other school districts.

The district's assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, who coordinates the federal fund-raising effort, maintains contacts in OE program offices and at the state level to keep track of funding possibilities. When money becomes available and the district has a need, the assistant superintendent calls on a district staff member--a district office administrator, a principal, or a classroom teacher--to take responsibility for developing a proposal. This person meets with others in the school district to develop ideas and arranges with staff in the school district to write sections of the proposal. Certain district office staff, principals, and classroom teachers have developed a specialty in writing a certain section of proposals.

The Superintendent

The superintendent is middle-aged, has a Ph. D. in educational administration, and came up through the system. He previously served as assistant superintendent for finance and planning, but served four years as associate director of a regional education laboratory. He is aggressive and has definite ideas on how the school district can be improved. Judging from his personality and pace of activity, it is doubtful that he will be spending the rest of his career as superintendent in Lindaton.

The superintendent's highest priority is in bringing the systems approach to the school district. Twelve years ago, he says, the school system was overly rigid and in a straightjacket, but since then has grown "like Topsy." He cites as an example the situation in reading where virtually each teacher uses a different reading program, teaches skills in a different order, and has a different priority on reading. As a consequence, the superintendent sees big holes in the reading curriculum and problems for students when they move to a new grade level and are assumed to have certain reading abilities.

To cope with such problems of discontinuities and gaps in the curriculum the superintendent believes that the district needs to adopt behavioral objectives in each subject area which outline a program of instruction. Each teacher would still be free to select instructional materials and instructional methods, but would be held accountable for students' achieving a minimal set of educational objectives. The superintendent argues that without the systems approach, teachers have no idea what they should be doing and end up going off in all directions. He sees a set of behavioral objectives as a way of unifying and coordinating the educational program of the school district. The superintendent says that "Nothing happens accidentally in education. To get change and effective teaching there must be objectives, evaluation, and monitoring. You need to have a complete delivery system."

Three years ago when the superintendent first came, he established several committees of principals and teachers to reexamine curriculum plans and develop instructional objectives in each field, organized around curriculum systems approaches. Each committee was responsible for finding or developing educational objectives in a certain subject area at all grade levels. The performance of these committees, however, has been mixed. Some have made progress. One committee has developed a program of performance objectives in mathematics that is being used in the school district. Progress has also been made in the physical sciences, although not as much as in mathematics.

Some teachers reacted strongly to the superintendent's behavioral objectives initiative and complained through their association and to the principals. Teachers fear the prospect of having to adopt curriculum objectives in several subject areas at once and of keeping records on student progress in all these areas. They don't see how they will have enough time to keep all these records unless the district provides extra assistance in the form of paraprofessional aides or specialist teachers. One teacher said:

> If we have to do all that, we'll end up being a bunch of clerks. . . . The administrative end of teaching is getting out of hand. You end up not doing much teaching with all the records you have to keep now. I feel my place is teaching and I wonder if the people who plan all these things have taught

> in the classroom more than a month. They don't know about all the other things you have to do to keep the classroom going. Each project that comes along wants you to keep different records. It takes a year to learn in each one what's important and what's not important, and now they want us to take on several subject areas at once. It's too much.

PROJECT INITIATION

The idea for the reading project can be traced to a comprehensive needs assessment done by the school system in 1969, as a response to problems caused by changes in the community. The needs assessment was a Delphi-style survey of parents, students, and school district staff, which showed that reading was the top priority concern of almost everyone.* As a result of the assessment, a former superintendent had the idea that the district should hire a number of specialist reading teachers who would work with students in a remedial or developmental reading capacity.

The assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction suggested that a bigger dent could be made in the reading problem by getting to the classroom teachers rather than relieving them of their problem children, and out of discussions there emerged the idea of the district's having a number of reading teachers who would work with classroom teachers to develop their capacities for reading instruction. These specialist teachers would have to have exceptional abilities because of the difficulties of working with and attempting to change classroom teachers.

The former superintendent initiated a nationwide search for a number of highly qualified reading specialist teachers, but didn't have much luck. By this time it was July, and few reading teachers did not already have contracts. The recruiters came back with the message that even if the district had started earlier, it would have been difficult to find many candidates.

About the same time, the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction was talking with the state Title III person about other matters and inquired if there were any funds available for projects. She was told that there was some money available for the state in the Section 306 program and that no one else in the state had applied for the money, so that the chances of being funded were pretty good.

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*The assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction said that the results of this needs assessment have been included in several proposals submitted for federal funding, and that she thinks this appeals to federal funding offices.

The availability of federal funds and the problem of finding reading teachers outside the district suggested a project to train a number of reading teachers in the skills that were needed. With the help of the state Title III person, an application was hurriedly submitted for a $10,000 planning grant and accepted by the federal Title III program office.

Writing the Project Proposal

Once the preliminary proposal was approved, the assistant superintendent called together a team of eight people to develop a plan. Two were experienced resource teachers in the system (they later became reading teachers in the project); one was a sixth-grade teacher who usually wrote the evaluation section of proposals; one was a consultant from the local private university; and the rest were from the central district staff. No principals or other teachers were involved. A consultant firm provided technical assistance under contract in writing the proposal. The assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction says that the proposal had to be prepared in too short a time to involve teachers and the community, and in addition, it would have been hard to sell the teachers on a staff development project. The assistant superintendent knew how strongly the teachers believed that what the district needed was more remedial reading teachers.

One additional member of the proposal writing task force was a community representative appointed by the superintendent. This person made little contribution to the proposal writing effort, as he was too busy with his many other community commitments.

During the proposal writing period, three task force members attended a three-day accountability conference in Chicago sponsored by the federal Title III program to learn how to prepare proposals for the Title III, Section 306 program. This was the district's first attempt at a sophisticated federal proposal; it had not previously prepared proposals that required process objectives and behavioral objectives. The assistant superintendent says that the conference was extremely helpful in preparing the project plan and subsequent proposals according to the federal Title III format.

As a result of writing the proposal for the reading project, the district learned that the group writing the proposal should be larger and that more people from the district should be included right from the beginning to gain broader support.

The Proposal

The task force produced a massive proposal that was over 300 pages long. Included were countless behavioral objectives, detailed work schedules, project organizational structure, and pages of data analysis plans and evaluation criteria. The abstract of the proposal states:

> The proposed project is a comprehensive plan to build a permanent institutionalized capability for diagnostic reading instructions which will persist beyond the duration of the project. The diagnostic approach to reading instruction . . . will simultaneously involve children, teachers, administrators, parents, reading specialists in-training, pre-service teachers, and university personnel in solving complex problems with reading. The project will be exemplary in testing a complex model for attacking reading problems within an integrated urban community through joint school-university efforts.
>
> Children who have not previously found success in reading will increase their capability and competency significantly as measured by normative tests and performance criteria. Students at all levels will increase their desire and liking for reading and will demonstrate increased achievement. Standardized instruments, interviews, attitude inventories, and observations will be used to monitor achievement of the children as they increase their desire and ease of reading.
>
> Classroom teachers will become more skilled in diagnosis, in the use of performance objectives, and in measuring individualized instruction, motivation of children, and analysis of teaching.
>
> In order to resolve the problems of inadequate preparation of classroom teachers to teach reading, inadequate training of teacher aides and volunteers, inadequate training of teachers to use the services of aides, and inadequate provision of services for children with severe reading disabilities, 14 reading specialists will be trained to continuously (1) retrain teachers, and train new teachers, teacher aides, and volunteers, and (2) give special help to children with severe reading disabilities . . . .
>
> Materials and resources will be identified, selected, and organized for efficient access in usage to fill instructional prescriptions resulting from individual diagnoses. Efficient record keeping forms will be developed for utilization by children and teachers.
>
> Parents will be fully involved in the program and will be taught to increase the child's learning capacity by providing enriching and supportive experience in the home.
>
> School administrators will become involved in management processes in the utilization of systems analysis approaches to planning and organizing effective diagnostic reading instruction programs throughout the school system . . . technical assistance will be sought for planning, organizing, and evaluating the project and for conducting an educational audit.
>
> A coordinating council, representative of the community, composed of parents, students, teachers, administrators, and other citizens will serve in an advisory capacity to the project director and staff.

For each of these components there were behavioral objectives, performance criteria, and milestones.

Project Staffing

After some delay, district people heard from the federal Title III program office in the late spring of 1971 that their project would be funded beginning the following August. Because this notice came so late in the school year, the district decided to begin hiring staff immediately, so that a project staff could be available by the beginning of school. This need to hire staff quickly, because of the short lead-time on funding, turned out to have major consequences for the project as it eventually unfolded.

The district decided that there was no one within the system with sufficient reading expertise to direct the project, so it initiated a search to find someone from the outside. The superintendent personally made many calls to his contacts in universities and elsewhere to find someone capable of managing the project. He finally located a reading specialist from a university in another state, but not until late in the summer after all of the other project staff had been hired, and some of the planned summer workshops were being conducted.

The district initiated a broad search to find candidates for the fourteen (later expanded to fifteen) reading teacher trainees. A letter was sent to all district teachers announcing the project and the availability of positions, and the personnel department conducted a search for candidates from outside the district. A notice of positions available circulated in the district produced eight or ten volunteers, while contacts in other school districts produced several more. The final selection included five from outside and ten from inside the district.

Applicants were screened by a selection committee, which included two writers of the original proposal. Review by such committees is ordinary procedure in the district for screening candidates for teaching or administrative vacancies. Specifically, the purpose of these committees is to examine applicants on their sensitivity to black-white factors, ability to work with students, and other interpersonal kinds of abilities. The committees are not concerned with an applicant's professional qualifications. Final selections of personnel for projects are made jointly by the superintendent, the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, and other administrators who are closely involved.

Persons selected for the reading teacher trainee positions fell into three categories: (1) Eight were teachers from within the system, two with long experience in special projects in the district; and the rest were remedial reading or classroom teachers. Few had any background in reading other than as a classroom teacher, or in working as a resource teacher with other teachers. Several project staff members report that a few of the classroom and remedial reading teachers were misfits, no longer able to contribute effectively as teachers in the classroom. (2) Two reading teachers were hand-picked by the non-public schools for participation in the project. (3) Five teachers were hired from outside the district; most of them had a strong background in reading and experience as remedial reading teachers. As a result, the fifteen teacher trainees ranged in experience and training from a person with a master's degree in reading and with classroom and consulting experience to a former high school teacher with no reading training and who had not taught for more than ten years. This range proved to be a big problem in the project.

Kickoff Meeting

Teachers and principals in the school district first heard about the reading project in a meeting held near the end of school in the spring of 1971. Teachers who were interested in knowing more were notified by letter of a special meeting; approximately one-third came, with higher proportions from some schools and almost none from others. This meeting was held along with a series of workshops which ran for three days following the close of school.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The district has had a difficult time implementing its diagnostic reading project. There were changes in every aspect of the project including training activities, the staff, and the objectives of the project. The first two years, the project proceeded essentially according to plan with emphasis on training reading teachers and providing in-service training to teachers. In the third year, the project was changed to include experimentation with the Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development. There are extreme differences in this project in reading teachers' approaches, schools' activities and interest in the project, and the priorities of the superintendent and the project staff.

The project as originally conceived focused primarily on individual teachers, not on schools; but school differences became very important. No principals participated intensively in any of the project planning activity, although they were informed [illegible] the project from its beginning. Most principals supported the project as a way to get additional resources for their schools, but some actively resisted because they disagreed with project objectives.

First-Year Activities

Assignment of Reading Teachers. Reading teachers were assigned to schools in a meeting held at the beginning of the project. According to some who attended this meeting, it was a rather awkward affair. Each principal described his school and interest in the reading project, and the reading teachers described their skills and background. From the discussion, it was clear that the principals knew little about the reading project and that many of the reading teachers knew little about reading. After this, both sides ranked their preferences on secret ballots, which were then compiled to arrive at the assignment of reading teachers to schools. A few of the principals had made informal arrangements with a reading teacher before the meeting, but the rest of the matches were largely arbitrary. A few good matches resulted, but in some schools, personality differences between principals and reading teachers and the poor performance of reading teachers led to many reassignments.

Workshops. During the first year of the project, the reading teachers spent about 60 percent of their time on their own professional development, mainly in workshops conducted for a two-week period in the summer and three afternoons a week during the school year by a professor from the local private university who had been consulted in writing the project proposal. The professor/consultant's purpose in these workshops was to give the reading teachers solid, in-depth training in reading theory and clinical diagnosis, much to the same level of detail and sophistication as a graduate course in reading. For example, many sessions were spent on how to analyze the California Test of Basic Skills,* and weeks were spent on the theory and interpretation of the Spache readability test. There was also a lot of work on other readability formulas and tests (a readability test is for scientifically determining the reading difficulty level of a book).

Soon dissatisfied with these workshops, the reading teachers began meeting among themselves to help each other. They thought that they were getting little from the reading consultant but busy work. Those with a strong background in reading thought that a lot of work on readability tests was unnecessary; they had learned about them in college, found them useless in the classroom, and saw no need to learn about them again. There were complaints that "Teachers don't need to know the intricacies and subtleties of interpreting the Spache test. We spent a lot of time on that and now none of us use it." Other reading teachers complained that there were many subjects that should have been covered that were not. For example, one reading teacher wanted more information about the Dolch reading test, which she thought was more useful in the classroom than the tests that were covered in the workshops. The reading teachers also objected to the reading consultant's attitude; one said, "She treated us like children." The reading teachers wanted techniques for working with teachers, ideas on how to introduce diagnostic methods to teachers, etc. "The first thing a teacher wants to know," one reading teacher said, "is how she is ever going to be able to keep several groups going in a classroom without losing control. We needed to know some techniques for helping teachers on that." "The trouble was," another reading teacher said, "we had to work with teachers, not kids, and we didn't know how to do that. We knew how to work with kids, and everything she was telling us was useful only to a specialist teacher working with kids. Teachers would never do all the stuff she was telling us about." Another reading teacher said, "The reading consultant was too academic. She tried to teach the reading teachers clinical methods when the first thing she should have done was teach us how to help the teachers get groups going, ways of helping the kids be self-instructing. Then the teacher will have time to do diagnostic work and work with single groups on particular skills."

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*The reading achievement test used in the district.

As it became clear that the training workshops were not working out, the project director was urged by the district administration to drop the reading consultant and reorganize the project; but he declined to do so, and the reading consultant remained for all of the first year. The director did not enforce the consultant's performance contract according to its intent although the consultant literally met her obligations. The project director also decided against reorganizing the project, even though he disagreed with the approach that the reading consultant was taking. Compared with the consultant, the project director was more interested in "the whole reading experience of the child" as distinguished from breaking up reading into a series of skills, and was more interested in working with the classroom teachers than developing reading specialist skills. The reading consultant eventually left the project at the end of her performance contract time when she became frustrated by the teachers' complaints, their lack of cooperation, and the meetings that they were holding by themselves.

At the same time that the reading teacher-trainees were learning to be reading specialists, a decision was made to also have them begin working with classroom teachers. This proved to be a mistake because the reading teachers had not had enough preparation time to be confident of their skills and to be secure in working with teachers. One trainee who came from the local school district and eventually became one of the best reading teachers commented, "We were all thrust into the workshops quickly and didn't have a very good idea of what we were expected to do. There was no direction to the project and we had a hard time knowing how we should operate in a school. We shouldn't have been assigned to the schools so soon. We didn't know what to do. . . . " As a result, the classroom teachers quickly became disappointed in the reading teachers, and began to ignore them. A principal in one school said that a problem with the project was that the reading teachers were not prepared in their specialty when they first came to the school. "The teachers saw it fast," this principal says, "and they knew that the reading teachers had only six hours of training. Right away, some of the teachers branded the project as not working very well."

The reading teachers also had trouble with teachers who were not aware that the project was coming at them with in-service training and who wanted the project to provide remedial reading teachers instead of in-service training.

Second-Year Activities

After the reading consultant left, the project director and reading teacher trainees began to take control of the project and change it in a number of ways.

In-Service Workshops. At the suggestion of one of the project reading teachers (who later became the project's Reading Coordinator), the training format was changed to have reading teachers develop workshop sessions on particular reading topics and present them to the schools. Thus each reading teacher in the project would select a topic of personal interest, learn about that topic from published literature, and with consultant help develop and present an in-service workshop for teachers on the topic. Reading teachers were to follow up their workshop with classroom assistance to teachers if they requested it. Workshops were developed on three major topics: (1) organizing the classroom for individual reading, (2) classroom diagnosis of children's reading abilities, and (3) learning centers. Each workshop was given in four weekly installments with a lecture/demonstration one afternoon a week and the follow-up into the classrooms on the topic of each session during other afternoons. Mornings were spent planning the workshop session for the following week. In successive weeks, the workshop on learning centers covered, for example, introduction to the learning-center concept, initiating the use of centers, enriching and maintaining learning centers, and diagnostic use of centers. In each four-week period, the workshop was presented to two schools, and there were two rounds of workshops so that some schools received more than one workshop. Schools were matched to workshops by a vote of teachers, with preferences of the majority of teachers in a school determining which workshops would be presented to which schools. Workshop attendance was voluntary, and about 104 elementary teachers, or slightly over 50 percent of the district staff, decided to attend. Workshop attendance was somewhat less than totally voluntary in that teachers had to accumulate a certain number of workshop hours to get raises on the salary schedule, and participation in the project qualified the teachers for credit.

After giving these workshops in the fall, the project went back the rest of the year to having individual reading teachers work with teachers in the schools to which they were assigned.

This workshop classroom follow-up strategy was judged more effective by the project staff than the approach in the first year. It drew upon the varied individual skills of the reading teachers, encouraged sharing among them, and provided more intensive and coordinated work with classroom teachers.

The follow-up feature of the workshop was generally applauded. One teacher said, "We get shown a lot of things in workshops, but they don't mean much to me until I do something with them." The only problem was that the workshops were held in the afternoon and no relief time was provided, which many on the project staff believed reduced teacher attentiveness and willingness to participate. Also, not every teacher taking the workshop fully understood the necessity for actually implementing changes proposed in in-service sessions. Some felt they did not have the time; others did not have the inclination.

Reassignment of Reading Teachers. During the first two years of the project, there were numerous reassignments of reading teachers to schools, necessitated by the loss of reading teachers. One school had three reading teachers the first year. Some left of their own accord, but others were released because of budget reductions originally built into the project to force the district into picking up the expenses for continuing the reading teachers. The reading teachers who were released were reassigned to remedial reading or classroom positions. From the original fifteen trainees in the project, only eight were left in the project by the end of the second year.

One reading teacher said that these losses were actually gains because the reading teachers who left were "a big drag" on the project; but on the whole, a resulting lack of continuity in relationships between reading teachers and classroom teachers seriously hurt the project.

Resignation of the Project Director. The original project plan schedule specified that as reading teachers became trained, they would begin working more with classroom teachers and developmental effort would be started to specify a reading system for the district. The original project plan provided for only a small effort to develop a reading system; but the superintendent, with his priority on curriculum systems, wanted much more effort on this reading system objective, and starting in the first year, began to pressure the project to get busy on a reading system for the district. The superintendent also pressured the project director into serving as chairman of the curriculum committee responsible for writing a system of behavioral objectives for reading.

The project director, however, was no great fan of reading systems and dragged his heels on getting started. Eventually, he hoped that this reading system objective, which he had had no hand in writing, would fade away. He did conduct a low-level search for a reading system and concluded that the district should not develop a system of its own and that if any system was to be employed, the Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development was the best available. But he called only one meeting of the curriculum committee. By the end of the first year, the superintendent could see that little progress was being made toward developing a reading system and he began to increase pressure on the project director.

The superintendent says that by the end of the second year, reports from the committee system that he uses to evaluate the performance of his administrators were showing that the reading project was not producing many results. In this evaluation system, each district administrator annually writes a number of self-imposed performance objectives which are agreed on with a committee of three persons, two chosen by the administrator and one by the superintendent. These committees were responsible for periodic reporting to the superintendent on how well the administrators are achieving their performance objectives. In the reading project, the project director chose three persons to serve on his evaluation committee: the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, the project evaluator, and a junior high principal.

For a number of reasons the project director decided to resign at the end of the second year. The superintendent says that he resigned when faced with the results of the evaluation committee reports, but in addition there was a fundamental philosophical difference between the superintendent and the project director over the district needs. Against the superintendent's enthusiasm for a highly specified reading system with formal diagnostic tests and record-keeping, was the project director's informal approach to diagnostic instruction in reading. The project director's main objectives were individualizing instruction of reading through helping teachers informally recognize differences in students and providing guidance on how teachers could arrange individualized learning experiences to meet student needs. The project director preferred using informal reading inventories to using formal diagnostic tests, preferred being concerned with the "totality of the reading experience" as opposed to emphasizing basic skills, and preferred helping teachers learn how to develop their own reading materials rather than use commercial materials. Another problem was that many felt that the project director was a poor administrator, who was more interested in working with reading teachers and classroom teachers than in establishing a context for a smooth progress of the project. The assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction criticized him for not keeping the central office informed and for not submitting his reports on time; many others felt that he was not communicating with the principals. One principal said, somewhat bitterly, that he was always the last one to find out about things concerning the project in his school. According to one of the project staff, personality differences were also involved in the project director's resignation. The project director never forgave the district for the quality of some of the staff that he found appointed to his project when he arrived.

Third-Year Activities

After the project director resigned, the project evaluator was promoted to the position of project director and one of the reading teachers moved up to the position of reading coordinator. The superintendent requested that in the third year the project would continue its previous activities but concentrate on piloting the Wisconsin Design in the district schools.

Wisconsin Design. The project moved ahead with piloting the Wisconsin Design with less than total enthusiasm. Except for the new project director, who was an enthusiast of the systems approach, most of the other project staff favored the informal approach to reading improvement which had dominated in the project up to the third year.

The first step in using the Wisconsin Design is to conduct break-in testing. The project proceeded with this task which involved administering a battery of diagnostic tests to students to evaluate their reading skill achievement as a preliminary step to instituting the Wisconsin Design for formalized diagnostic/ prescriptive instruction.

The schools responded to the superintendent's requests in different ways. Most chose to pilot either the word attack or study skills components of the Wisconsin Design; none elected to implement both. Break-in testing proved an onerous and time-consuming acitivity for the staff.

Workshops. The project staff also had to begin developing in-service workshops for teachers to train them in the Wisconsin Design. Each reading teacher was to develop his or her own workshop and present it in the schools where assigned. The complexity of the Wisconsin Design made it necessary for reading teachers to give a number of workshops over the course of the school year. Because of the hasty decision to implement the Wisconsin Design, reading teachers had no opportunity for formal training and had to decide themselves what to include in the workshops. Also because of the short time, the reading teachers were just one step ahead of the teachers who were being trained. Nevertheless, many teachers reported that these Wisconsin Design workshops were the best presented in the project.

Resource File. Although the Wisconsin Design includes a reference list for prescriptive teaching, none of the reading teachers whom we interviewed had been able to divert enough time from their other third-year activities to develop a reference library of instructional materials in their schools. Thus, the teachers in these schools had received a dose of formal training in reading diagnosis but, as of the time that we visited the project, didn't have all the resources needed for prescriptive teaching. The district planned to develop these files during the following summer and budgeted local funds for the purpose.

Reactions to the Wisconsin Design. Some teachers praised the Wisconsin Design because it revealed individual student needs and provided a way to teach to those needs, but most objected to the record-keeping involved. A file of index cards is kept on each student and holes are punched in the cards as students master specific skills. One project reading teacher, who is not an enthusiast of reading systems, doesn't understand why teachers object so much to record-keeping. She says that it doesn't take that long to punch holes in 25 index cards every so often after diagnostic tests are administered. This reading teacher believed that card-punching provided teachers with a record of students' reading abilities which could be given to other teachers and reported to parents, helped teachers keep track of progress, and gave them a way to organize classroom instruction. "You can't keep all that information on where kids are in your head," she said.

It is clear from talking to the teachers, however, that their complaints involve more than the record-keeping demands of the Wisconsin Design. They also fear, rightly or wrongly, that the district will be increasing its pupil/teacher ratio and that there will be behavioral objectives and record-keeping in several subject areas in addition to reading.

One project reading teacher who prefers the language experience approach to reading instruction objects that the Wisconsin Design is "very confining." She says, "Phonics is on the way out, and now along comes the Wisconsin Design where it's word attack, word attack, word attack. It's hard to spend so much time on that one subject. The study skills component is good, but I'm opposed to teaching word attack in isolation. It's not my cup of tea."

Community Advisory Committee

According to Title III specifications, the project was to have a community advisory committee, but although this committee was created, it never functioned effectively and parental involvement never materialized. The committee still exists, but it is completely disconnected from the project. Its main activity is to sponsor a children's book fair periodically. The project's reading coordinator says that she feels the reason parent involvement has not been too successful so far is because reading is so complex. Also, parents are not too interested in the actual operation of the project. They mostly want to know ways in which they can help children read better, and they need specific guidelines on what to do.

Evaluation

The project has a massive internal evaluation system. The project evaluator (who is also the present project director) is experienced in evaluation and has written articles and papers on the subject. On paper, at least, the project is guided by a long list of behavioral objectives that are revised yearly, based on the previous year's performance. Data for the evaluation are compiled from surveys of teachers, principals, and reading teachers, evaluations of specific workshops, a weekly staff log, and student test scores.

The project evaluator is apparently the only one in the project enthusiastic about the evaluation effort. Some of the others are openly resentful of the amount of project resources that go into the evaluation and feel that the efforts do not serve to improve the project. "All those statistics . . . who reads them?" one reading teacher asked. "I know which teachers are doing it right from working with them long before any evaluation results come in. The teachers let you know when something doesn't work." Another staff person says that the evaluation comes out at the end of the year, far too late to affect decisions made on the project. As for the project auditor, one comment was, "The auditor says one thing and writes another. He doesn't understand the project."

The project evaluator is somewhat cut off from his staff, partly because he was hospitalized five months the third year of the project.* The complaints are that he tends to be out of contact with the project and doesn't understand reading. He spends some of his time with another project in the district, even though he charges full-time to the reading project. Another reading teacher said, "The evaluator has had nothing but troubles. His surveys are resented, and the kinds of reports he writes are not accepted. But, if you know the way that an evaluator writes, it's very clear. If you don't, then it's hard to follow what he's doing. He used to try to explain the project evaluation to us but nobody listened." The project evaluator's systems approach style bothers many of the reading teachers. "He can't talk without drawing charts," one said.

Several reading teachers commented, however, that they valued the questionnaires that were distributed to classroom teachers at workshop sessions and returned immediately to the reading teachers.

Communication among the project staff and between the project and principals and teachers in the school was a severe problem. In the first two years of the project, little attempt was made to explain it to the schools through meetings or publications, and principals had to find out what was going on from the reading teachers. The principals had virtually no say in activities of the project except in regard to when workshops were to be scheduled in their schools. The project staff came together only in sessions to develop workshops, but these meetings generally involved teams of reading teachers and not the whole staff. Many reading teachers said that they were rarely involved in decisionmaking. For example, the decision to favor the Wisconsin Design was made by the first project director after consulting with a few staff members and principals. There was no general discussion of alternatives. Other than the requested pilot tryouts of the Wisconsin Design, revisions of the project's objectives were decided by the project director, the evaluator, and two reading teachers.

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*Thus, we did not have a chance to interview him for the case study.

The project evaluator developed a complicated log system to keep track of the activities of the reading teachers. Each week the reading teachers had to fill out a form describing their activities in hour-by-hour detail. They resented these logs and didn't believe that the central project staff used the information for any useful purpose.

One reading teacher in the project suggested that it was a mistake not to advertise some of the early project successes--"And there were some," she said. The lack of communication compounded with the general disorganization of the project meant that the staff heard only about all the problems and never about any of the successes achieved.

A number of reading teachers said that there was an informal power structure in the project that included the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction and the two specialist teachers whom the district appointed to the project staff. Through this network and periodic informal meetings that the assistant superintendent had with all members of the project staff (individually and in groups), the district administration was able to have a good idea of how the project was going.

Organization

The reading project had a simple organizational structure: the project director reported directly to the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, with the reading coordinator responsible to the project director. The reading coordinator was responsible for assigning reading teachers to schools and coordinating activities of reading teachers.

The project was originally located in an elementary school near the west side of the district, and some teachers reported difficulty getting instructional materials from there. "The materials were nice," one teacher said, "but they were far away and it was hard to know what they had. And then when we would order any, I felt I was lucky if I got them." Midway into the project, the headquarters was moved to another school in the district, because of reorganization. Following the third year, the decision was made to distribute the instructional materials purchased among the schools.

PROJECT IMPACT

According to classroom teachers and members of the project staff, the project had its most significant effect on the district in the third year. Overall, the effects were varied and hard to summarize. Some teachers were greatly changed, others changed marginally, and some were unaffected. Some schools changed markedly; others were barely touched.

Impact on Teachers

Effects on teachers were uneven and of various kinds. One teacher reported that as a result of the project she now uses commercial diagnostic tests in her teaching whereas before she had used her own informal reading inventories. Another teacher said that she found the learning centers workshop to be most helpful and had set one up in her classroom. Some teachers said that they had learned more about what some reading skills were (e. g., diphthongs, blends, etc.) and how to teach them. One principal summarized the effect of the project on his school as, "I think the teachers search for ideas more than they used to, the school has loosened up some on classroom organization, there are more learning centers in the classroom, the teachers know more about diagnostic testing, some teachers are individualizing more, and we have slightly better records of student progress." The reading teacher in this school reports that only one teacher has completely switched to the individualized, diagnostic/ prescriptive approach to reading, but agrees that many other teachers have made marginal changes. Another teacher thought that the project helped her most by providing more instructional materials for her classroom.

Wisconsin Design

The Wisconsin Design is being used in some classrooms, although at the time of our visit, resource files were not generally available.

In one school where the principal enthusiastically supported the Wisconsin Design, all but one or two teachers were doing the testing and following the routine of the reading system within a few months.

The reading coordinator, who participated in the trip to find out about the Wisconsin Design, says that the district will never be able to go very far with the Wisconsin Design until the schools switch over to team teaching in reading. She says that the load on the classroom teacher is too great unless they specialize in teaching certain reading skills and that the only way to do this is to team teach. As yet there has been no move in the school district to increase the amount of team teaching in reading in conjunction with the implementation of the Wisconsin Design.

Reading Teachers

Prime beneficiaries of the project appear to have been the reading teachers--particularly those six who lasted through all three years of the project.

Because of the nonsystematic way in which the reading teachers trained themselves, they improved in different ways. All became skilled in techniques for working with teachers; some learned more about individualizing instruction; others learned more about the language experience approach to reading; and others concentrated on diagnosis.

How to work with teachers was a difficult phase of training. Even the ones who had had a background in remedial reading found it difficult. As one trainee said, "You have to learn how to be sensitive to a teacher's strengths and weaknesses and how to deal with them. You have to learn how much a teacher can take all at once without turning off. You have to learn how to stand up in front of a group and give demonstration lessons. You soon learn that the lecture format is ineffective for working with teachers; you have to work with them on an individual basis."

The project reading coordinator, and other reading teachers, stated that it takes about two years for a reading teacher to have an effect on a school. The reading coordinator said, "It takes a trained reading consultant two years to level off in a school. After that it's smooth sailing, and there won't be much more impact." Another reading teacher said, "You really can't begin to have an effect until the second year. In the first year, the teachers don't believe you're for real. You have to spend a lot of time getting to know them on a personal basis and establishing that you are a person who can help them."

One serious problem in the reading project was a lack of continuity in the assignment of reading teachers to schools. Only one or two reading teachers had more than a one-year assignment in any one school. In the first year there were many problems: two previous resource teachers had commitments to complete and did not participate as fully in the project as they needed to; there were personality conflicts among many of the initial reading teacher-to-principal assignments (one school had three reading teachers in the first year, none of whom had any effect); and then there was the problem that so many of the trainees were poorly prepared for a reading project and even incapable of benefitting from it.

Change Techniques

Through talking with their colleagues, their principals, and empirical experimentation, the six reading teachers who stayed through the project learned a great deal about techniques for changing teachers behavior. These reading teachers will be able to continue as reading specialists in the district or in some other district, or in work as resource teachers in the subject areas.

Most reading teachers report that they have a favorite instructional approach to reading and tend to try that out first with the teachers. A good reading teacher, however, has an ability to teach other instructional approaches such as individualization, linguistics, or phonics, and be able to tell when the teacher is comfortable or not comfortable with any of these approaches. An exceptionally able reading teacher will be able to teach capable teachers more than one approach to reading instruction and how that teacher can diagnose which approach should be used for which children.

Most of the reading teachers in the project used the strategy of starting out simply by urging the teacher to try one skill-oriented lesson. Care was usually taken to suggest a lesson that would be easy for the teacher to do and that would be liked by the children. The reading teacher might either help the classroom teacher prepare this lesson or suggest a pairing with a teacher in the same school or in another school, who was already skilled in diagnostic instruction.

The reading teachers emphasized the importance of arranging conditions so that there would be quick success. "When the kids like it and ask the teacher for more, she's hooked," one teacher said. "You've got about two chances. If the kids like it on the first or second try, then the teacher will be sold. But if the kids stay turned off, that teacher will be lost for a while." We heard a few stories about teachers who presented a skill-oriented lesson to their class and were surprised, and pleased to find, that all but one or two students were able to master the lesson.

All reading teachers said that in order to make any headway with teachers they had to follow up in the classroom and provide teachers with in-class assistance. "The day after the workshop you've got to go into the classroom and help the teachers if you expect to get any changes," one reading teacher said. "You've got to give support, and I mean support."

Reading teachers also did a lot of legwork for classroom teachers. They might take problem kids for remedial reading, give the teachers a hand with diagnostic testing and record-keeping, or track down instructional materials. They thought that it was important to spend a lot of time learning about the personal relationships between teachers in a school. One reading teacher said, "Sometimes to get to person C you have to change persons A and B. If the relationships are right, they change automatically, if you can get to persons A and B. I sometimes think it's awful to work through people this way, but it works." One reading teacher said that her principal was the guiding force in teaching her about becoming a change agent. "My principal told me that the problem I was having getting a teacher to change could probably be overcome if I worked on getting change in our affective relationship first. I tried that and it works, and now I use it all the time."

One gets the sense from talking to reading teachers in this project that they have, as a result of the project, become much more knowledgeable about working with teachers and have developed a sixth sense that helps them judge when teachers are ready for change, what kinds of changes should be introduced first, when to back off a little bit, when to provide reinforcement, and what strategies work best in what situations. There was no formal training in the project in these change agent techniques, but some reading teacher trainees evidently were able to pick them up through on-the-job experiences.

Interschool Differences

The project had different effects on different schools that we visited. In one school in which there was little effect, the principal saw no need for diagnostic reading and, in fact, claimed that she already had behavioral objectives in reading in her school, because she had a time schedule indicating where each teacher should be in the basal reader at certain points in time. "Her big goal," the reading teacher assigned to that school said, "was to have each teacher be on the same page of the same basal reader every day of the school year. Every book was covered from front to back without skipping a page." Nevertheless, in this school, the reading teacher was able to go around the principal and work with three teachers. Another school that was scarcely affected was the one in the affluent part of town. The teachers in this school felt that their methods were already so advanced that the project didn't have much to offer. In another school, which was organized mostly into open classrooms, the project reading teacher was able to train most of the teachers in the language experience approach to reading.

All high school English and language arts teachers were originally invited to participate in the project but did not cooperate well and were soon dropped.

One school got branded by the project as being the most resistant and uncooperative. The principal said:

> We're the poorest school and always feel that we're the doormat in the district. In the rich schools, the parents know where to push to get the

> things that they want for their schools. They call the principal, pressure the administration to get what they want. They have a sense of "materialness" that poor folks in our neighborhood don't have. I don't resent the richer schools, but I hope that we'll be getting more from the school district. There have been a lot of problems with the reading project in this school. They keep trying to get our school to mold to the project rather than the project to our school. Our teachers resent being told what to do and what's important.
>
> When our teachers first heard about the project they complained that what the school needed was a remedial reading teacher to work with the low achieving kids, not somebody to work with the teachers. We finally got a reading teacher from the district but then we had to share her. (One of the teachers in the school said that the reason why the teachers wanted a remedial reading teacher was that because they were in a poor district they had a number of children with reading problems. The school had a remedial reading teacher funded by a state program but according to the rules of this program remedial reading teachers could only work with students of 100 IQ or better. The teachers thought that the children with the lower IQs should also have a remedial reading teacher.)
>
> In the first year of the reading project we had three reading teachers in this school. Most of them, shall we say, were not very good but I never complained about it. Why they kept changing the reading teachers around, I was never told. The reading teacher that we have now is doing wonders. I don't know how we got along without her.

At one point, the superintendent had a talk with the principal about the reading project in his school. The principal describes the meeting in this way:

> The superintendent asked me why our school had problems cooperating with the project. I told him that I was not aware of a lack of cooperation with the project. The superintendent seemed to have a lot of information on what happened during the first few months of the project that I didn't know anything about. I asked permission to do some checking on the problem to find out all about the encounters, meetings, and go over everything that touched on it. I had another meeting with the superintendent and I asked that the project leader be there. The project director said that the reading teacher had been insulted by teachers from my school. I asked him why he had not contacted me about this problem previously. I told him that public relations was the key to the success of his project; that we needed to be informed about what was going on.

The principal continued, however, to support the teachers in their demands for a remedial reading teacher and refused to compromise with the superintendent on the issue. The principal said, "I had to decide whether I would back up my teachers or give in to the administration. Sometimes you have to stand nose to nose with them for as long as you can to show that you mean business. I wanted to show the teachers that I was behind them all the way. I didn't like the superintendent's approach too much . . . . Clout doesn't do a job this day and age."

Other factors in this situation were that the principal was appointed to this school at the same time the project started and had no previous experience as a school principal. In his first job he had from the first day a special project coming at his teachers who didn't want any part of it, and he was in a difficult situation. Another factor was that the teachers in this school are the most senior in this district, and the principal is relatively young.

The logjam was broken when the district decided to give the school a part-time remedial reading teacher and the project assigned a new reading teacher. Since that time, the school has cooperated fully with the project and changes began to occur.

CONTINUATION

The effort to implement the Wisconsin Design will continue at district expense. The superintendent says he has checked into the costs and believes that the district will be able to continue without outside assistance. Others in the district expressed some doubt that the district will continue to pick up the extra expense, and others expressed skepticism that the innovation will last very long. These skeptics remember that a few years back, ITA was the rage in the district and now little remains of that approach to reading. The district has budgeted extra positions in reading for next year to provide for three of the current reading teachers, who will be retained as districtwide reading consultants. The district has promised other reading teachers still with the project that other positions in the district will be found for them.

The district has also applied for an Emergency School Aid Assistance Act grant that would provide 5 1/2 additional positions for remedial reading teachers. If the district receives this grant, some reading teachers from the current project may be transferred to the new grant.

The district has also applied to the Title III, Section 306 program for a developer-dissemination project to demonstrate the project-developed workshops to other school districts. When we visited the project, the district did not know whether or not this project would be funded. If funded, positions would be available for one or two project reading teachers.

At the suggestion of the Title III program, the district proposed a drastic cut in the project budget for the third year to force itself to plan for the phase-out of federal funds. The only result of this action was that two project reading teachers were dropped and transferred to the district budget in available remedial reading teacher positions.

DISSEMINATION

The project reading coordinator and a reading teacher attended an International Reading Association annual meeting and presented a workshop on the project. Also, there have been a number of visitors to the schools, and two articles have appeared in The Reading Teacher magazine. News of project activities has appeared in the local press.

ABLE/BAKER

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Able is an older northeastern city that has had its share of inner-city problems, including controversy among its varied ethnic population about the quality of city schools. Baker is a reading project that was established in Able and several adjacent communities.

Reading the Baker handouts, one has the image of a highly successful project that is helping under-achievers and handicapped children to read--many of them for the first time. Through tutoring, in-service training, and specially developed materials, Baker officials have developed, according to a project description, a model for the delivery of diagnostic/prescriptive teaching in reading. Remedial reading teachers are becoming trainers of teachers and reading program coordinators. Kids are changing their attitudes toward school and picking up skills they "had not mastered in a regular classroom situation." And all of this is "easily replicable." It is, as the Baker handout puts it, "a happy picture."

This picture, portrayed in a project description prepared for the U. S. Office of Education, is indeed a happy one. But it has an unreal ring to it. In fact, one has only to talk with the project's capable and candid staff to discover that Baker has encountered serious implementation problems. What follows is an attempt to describe the reality of the project--its initiation, development, and successes--and to attempt to explain why the project hasn't turned out as well as expected.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Six years ago, in the summer of 1968, a group of Able-area school superintendents met with some academics from a nearby university to discuss the need for more cooperation among schoolmen. The result was an idea, eventually funded by Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title III. to set up a collaborative program, Delta, which was to bring together the school systems of seven districts and the diocesan and independent schools in these districts.

Everyone favored greater cooperation, but no one was quite sure what it meant. Different people had different priorities and they all started thinking about concrete alternatives. In late 1968, Professor Mary Dunning of the university called people together to come up with ideas for a reading project that could carry out Delta's mandate, or at least part of it. After much discussion among reading specialists at nearby universities, a paper was developed, then shelved, and later resurrected when in 1970 it looked as if Delta might be able to tap some discretionary funds under Section 306 of ESEA Title III.

At Ms. Dunning's suggestion, Ms. Jean Payne was hired to develop a specific proposal suitable for submission to USOE. (This meant submitting the proposal in line with USOE's 11-step "accountability model," which, it seems, had little effect other than to make the proposal's organization quite difficult to follow.) After carefully examining the earlier work of the Dunning group, Ms. Payne suggested objectives and activities, which were written up by a professional proposal writer. It appears that the project's main purpose was to establish a "new type of delivery system" that "will capitalize on what is now known, within the context of larger issues of language and communication skills, about reading impediments." The proposal saw the inability to read as "a breakdown in the 'system' which must be fully operational for a child to learn to read." And, finally, the proposal called for "a drastically different approach, which treats reading as part of a total set of communication skills" and provides teachers with the "very specialized range of resources necessary to treat those problems within the general classroom."

Having established that the project planned to tap every base, to cooperate with anybody and everybody, and to deliver on a new delivery system, the proposal became a little more specific about what the project would do. First, Delta wanted to "make the classroom teachers more effective in reading and communications areas through improved utilization of diagnostic and treatment skills." Presumably, this was going to be done through the "in-service training and development" of 150 to 250 teachers in target schools. Test, teach, test was the basic idea. In addition, Delta claimed that target schools would "serve as laboratories for observation and investigation not only for the teachers within that school, but also for other teachers who will come in as observers." Second, the project, in keeping with contemporary notions, would attempt to change the role of the remedial reading teacher. Rather than working with small groups of underachieving students, he or she would become a trainer of teachers and a demonstrator of modern practices. Finally, in what appears to be a lower priority effort, Delta planned to "collaborate with the youth tutoring program conducted by the Able Model City, Education Division." This seemed to mean that there would be reading tutors in the schools.

After a series of intense face-to-face meetings between USOE and the project staff, Baker was funded. More specifically, the Able school system submitted the application. The funds were awarded to the school district, which then subcontracted most of the duties to the collaborative group, Delta. Within Delta, the funds were administered by Ms. Payne, director of the new Baker project.

Ms. Payne and her colleagues were excited by the project, particularly since they were led to expect the "full cooperation" of teachers and reading specialists who were anxious to improve their skills and take on new roles. This expectation seemed reasonable since "staff support had been assured . . . within each district." And, most important, Delta's relationship with the biggest district, Able, had been "already established." Hoping to be of service, not quite sure how, and with high hopes, Ms. Payne and her staff launched Baker in the fall of 1971.

IMPLEMENTATION

Ms. Payne was quickly initiated in the ways of the Able school system as she turned to Ms. Catherine Fromme, an associate superintendent, for the names of schools to work in. In keeping with the proposal, each school district was to choose appropriate schools for participation, consistent with the project's basic criteria. To this day, Ms. Payne doesn't have the slightest idea how particular schools were chosen, but the criteria apparently had little to do with school interest in Baker's programs or ideas.

Undaunted by Ms. Fromme, Ms. Payne and company marched off to the chosen schools to improve their reading programs. To their surprise, the Baker staff could hardly get through the school doors, much less deal with the teachers or provide "laboratories for observation and investigation." The Baker staff was viewed as outsiders and evaluators and certainly was not considered a resource to the schools. Principals didn't want experts parading around their schools, stirring up trouble, and disturbing the quiet. Remedial reading teachers didn't want to develop an entirely new role, and didn't like the idea of experts telling them to quit doing what they had been trained to do. Teachers, it seemed, were not about to spend extra time after school (unless they got paid) with experts who hadn't undergone classroom combat in Able. All in all, Baker received a decidedly cool and sometimes hostile reception in the Able public schools.

Faced with this resistance, the original notion of quickly entering the schools and providing in-service training was no longer feasible. Baker had to shift gears and find a vehicle for getting into the schools, developing trust, and, it was hoped, after some time the staff might be able to work with the remedial reading and classroom teachers. The vehicle was the tutoring program which, all of a sudden, was to become the heart and soul of Baker's efforts to infiltrate. (One Baker specialist suggested that it was also a way to show USCE that the project was accomplishing something.)

Each target school had a tutor-coordinator who was responsible for recruiting and supervising tutors. The tutors came from the community (paid the first year), colleges, and junior and senior high schools near the target schools. Each tutor would work with one or more tutees in the early elementary grades for approximately 20 minutes twice a week. The tutee would leave the classroom for help, the tutors were to keep records of student progress, and the tutor-coordinators were to keep the teachers informed. To help the tutors, Baker provided training and also developed some rather elaborate materials for implementing the diagnostic/prescriptive approach.

The tutoring program had several virtues. It provided extra help for the children, which in some cases was no doubt useful. For the schools, the project did the work at no cost to the Able school system, and all the teachers had to do was send their needy students out of the classroom to get extra help. From Baker's perspective, the tutoring program provided a foot in the door, a way both to break down the fear of outsiders and to try to instill trust in the project. Also, Baker officials hoped that if the tutors worked individually with students and used diagnostic/prescriptive materials, the teachers might pick up these approaches. In 1974, Baker had approximately 400 tutors in 30 schools.

Over the years, several changes have been made in Baker's target school efforts. Baker has exercised more control in selecting schools, requiring evidence of principal support before setting up programs. Tutors are no longer paid, making the program easier to continue after the project leaves. (One result, however, has been the almost complete elimination of adult community tutors--who simply can't afford to work for nothing.) Also, most college tutors have been dropped, in favor of tutors of high school age and younger. Conflicts in vacation schedules and lack of sustained commitment have been the main problems.

In 1972-73, Baker people came up with the idea of a reading resource room, to gain greater access to the schools and to carry out their ideas on role changes. Basically, a resource room provides a central location for books and materials, and, it is hoped, a meeting place for teachers and school reading specialists. Baker also sees it as a way to help build the status of remedial reading teachers and as a prod to get them to start acting more as consultants to teachers.

Aside from these target school changes, Baker has also slowly but surely stepped up its schedule of workshops. During this school year (1974-75), Baker claims to have served more than 800 teachers each month, providing in-service training in diagnosing reading problems, in defining the role change for remedial reading teachers, in preparing educational games, and in explaining how to set up reading resource rooms. Teachers attending workshops are drawn from all Baker participating school districts, without regard to their employment in particular target schools. For the most part, Baker's limited resources have been concentrated on short-term workshops, with little follow-up or focus of services on a select group that might need in-depth assistance. In addition, Baker has set up a Drop-In Center, providing a place for teachers to examine materials and to pick up ideas. Again, one does not get the impression that the Able target school teachers avail themselves of the facility.

To understand how these various activities worked locally, we visited target schools in four Able elementary school districts. (We did not, it should be noted, visit schools outside Able. Baker people say that they have faced significantly fewer obstacles in other smaller communities served by the project.) Each of these districts, consisting of two or three schools, is under the direction of a principal who is normally housed in one school, with assistant principals in charge of the day-to-day operations in the other schools. We met with the principals, assistant principals, tutor-coordinators, and several teachers.

It turned out there weren't many things to see or much information to gather. By and large, the principals weren't very knowledgeable about the details of Baker's efforts. The Baker project seemed to be of relatively low priority and was not viewed as making a particularly significant contribution to the Able schools that we visited. The tutor-coordinators were the only visible sign of Baker in the schools--that along with the beginnings of several reading resource rooms. Some coordinators were now accepted into the regular school community, but most of them were still viewed as guests or outsiders. The resource rooms we saw ranged from an empty file cabinet to a half-filled supply room stacked with materials (and described by the Baker staff as "the most elegant" resource room in Able). In no case did we find evidence that teachers were beginning to make use of these new resource facilities. Finally, there was little evidence that Baker was having any impact, direct or indirect, on the target school teachers, the original focal group of the 1971 proposal. As Ms. Payne candidly put it: "In all the [Able] schools our access to teachers is zilch . . . . We have had no major contact with teachers in any school system."

LIMITED IMPLEMENTATION--SOME REASONS WHY

How to explain the gap between the Baker proposal and its implementation is complex. Some explanations deal with the general complexity of change, others with the Baker project's particular features and the Able school system. Some of the more important explanations are listed here, not in any particular order.

First, the implementation gap was created in part by the unrealistically high hopes for change reflected in Baker's original proposal. Ms. Payne and her colleagues mistakenly believed that schools constantly scan the horizon for new approaches and new ideas, and that innovators need only demonstrate quickly the effectiveness of their approach. This view ignores the obstacles to implementation created by the specific history and tradition of schools, the high political stakes involved in changes, and the tendency of organizations to be satisfied with "good enough" solutions.

The problems of change were in fact doubly difficult in the Baker case because its model called for an entirely new role for the remedial reading teachers. Ms. Payne readily acknowledges today, "A person who chose to be a remedial reading teacher is not the same personality to be a teacher trainer." This view was well reflected by a terrified remedial reading teacher who told me, "I don't want to do demonstration teaching. That's just not my bag." In all, part of the problem was in the approach of proposers, who, being unfamiliar with the change process and the difficulty of changing ingrained roles, established unrealistic expectations that have been subsequently dashed. Older and wiser now, Ms. Payne acknowledges that she and her colleagues had been "incredibly naive." In this, they were little different from most reformers of the 1960s.

Another part of the implementation problem relates to the unique status of the Baker project. It is part of Delta, a collaborative that, in every sense of the word, is outside of the school systems it serves. Although Able is the recipient of the federal grant, the project is directed by a board manned by the superintendents of the participating school systems. Because of its status, Baker has some legitimacy (as part of the collaborative) to act as a consultant, but it doesn't have much leverage in dealing with various schools. Add to its outside character the fact that it is a federal project (federal projects come and go by the dozens in Able), it is easy to understand why Baker access to teachers and principals is substantially different from that of supervisors within a system. Cooperation, coordination, and collaboration are nice words to use in writing proposals but they don't mean much if not backed up with power.

A third, and perhaps most important, reason for the implementation gap can be found in the peculiar nature of the Able public school system. More than once it has been described as insulated, autocratic, closed, and unwilling to accept newcomers. Any innovation normally faces strong resistance. But this is particularly true, as in the case of Baker, when the top levels publicly support a project but never discuss the objectives with the school personnel who are expected to cooperate.

Up against this inbred system is Baker, whose officials seem to come from different backgrounds, to hold different values, and to work and act somewhat differently. Indeed, visiting Baker is like visiting a prestigious women's college. Its inhabitants impress one as clever, well-mannered, articulate, and decidedly middle class--the antithesis of the basically ethnic staff in the Able schools. Although this comparison is exaggerated, it does suggest that part of Baker's implementation problems can perhaps be found in the clash of cultures between the providers of services and their recipients.

It should be noted, however, that the problems created by these differences seem to have been magnified by the attitude of some Baker staff members. One gets the impression that many Able teachers are held in contempt. If these feelings are projected to Baker's Able constituency, as they certainly were to us, this no doubt complicates an already difficult relationship. As one principal said, "They [Baker] have closed minds . . . just like us."

One final reason for the implementation gap revolves around the issue of depth versus breadth. Baker has chosen to deal with a broad audience--30 or so schools and thousands of teachers participating in workshops. A small staff serving a large constituency results in services that are necessarily superficial. Once over lightly has been the preferred course of action. It has its value though. It can provide a real stimulus to a lot of teachers.

But it is not the only approach. Another possibility would have been to start by acknowledging how difficult it is to build trust in Able and by spending the first year or so in the schools establishing Baker's presence and showing the school staff that their needs and problems were being taken seriously. This approach, in the long run, probably could lead to some changes with the hard core teachers. But it is extremely time-consuming and frustrating, and drastically reduces the number of schools served.

One has the impression that Able people have chosen the former route (breadth as opposed to depth) partly because they think it makes more sense, but also because the Baker staff is more comfortable teaching seminars than slugging it out in Able school buildings.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

In its public documents, Baker claims that it has a working model that deserves replication. But based on our limited investigation in Able, there is very little to disseminate other than some impressive materials. Little has happened in Able to change the role of teachers or the reading specialists. The tutoring program, while probably helping some children, has not proved to be of sufficient success to suggest that Able would pick up the costs. And in the absence of an in-school coordinator who is paid to take responsibility, the tutoring will probably disappear.

On the positive side, however, Baker's workshops and materials appear to be of high caliber. But, as courses and materials provided at a university, it is hard to gauge their effect. Furthermore, things may be changing for the better. After a three-year stand-off with the recalcitrant Able school department, Baker staff thinks greater cooperation is in the offing. Able has named a liaison person for the project, and the director of Able's new Reading Department talked to us in positive terms about the value of Baker. Rhetoric is rich in Able, but this doesn't mean that a new relationship will develop.

Finally, it is curious to note that Baker, with all its difficulties, has been almost ignored by USOE. Part of the reason may be the rosy picture painted in the Baker materials. But another part of the explanation is that the Section 306 staff, like many staffs in USOE, is constantly turning over. Baker has had four USOE project officers in three years, and has been visited only twice by federal officials (harried by all the projects they are supposed to understand and monitor). The result is that Baker is promoted as a success in its written materials, because few people have taken the time to talk to its staff and to examine the many obstacles this project has faced.